International Archives of the History of Ideas
Archives internationales d'histoire des idées

Gregorio Piaia
Giovanni Santinello
Editors

Models of the History of Philosophy

Volume II: From the Cartesian Age to Brucker

Springer

MODELS OF THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

ARCHIVES INTERNATIONALES D'HISTOIRE DES IDÉES

INTERNATIONAL ARCHIVES OF THE HISTORY OF IDEAS

204

MODELS OF THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY:
VOLUME II: FROM THE CARTESIAN AGE TO BRUCKER

Edited by

Gregorio Piaia · Giovanni Santinello†

Board of Directors:

Founding Editors:
Paul Dibon† and Richard H. Popkin†
Director:
Sarah Hutton (Aberystwyth University)
Associate Directors: J.E. Force (University of Kentucky);
J.C. Laursen (University of California, Riverside)
Editorial Board: M.J.B. Allen (Los Angeles); J.-R. Armogathe (Paris);
J. Henry (Edinburgh); J.D. North (Oxford); M. Mulsow (Erfurt);
G. Paganini (Vercelli); J. Popkin (Lexington); G.A.J. Rogers (Keele);
Th. Verbeek (Utrecht)

For further volumes:
http://www.springer.com/series/5640

Models of the History of Philosophy

Volume II: From the Cartesian Age to Brucker

Edited by

Gregorio Piaia

and

Giovanni Santinello†

Springer

Editors
Prof. Gregorio Piaia
Università di Padova
Dipartimento di. Filosofia
Piazza Capitaniato 3
35139 Padova
Italy
gregorio.piaia@unipd.it

Prof. Giovanni Santinello†

Translation from the Italian language edition:
Storia delle storie generali della filosofia,
Vol. 2: *Dall'età cartesiana a Brucker*, ed. by G. Santinello
Copyright © La Scuola, Brescia 1979

ISSN 0066-6610
ISBN 978-90-481-9506-0 e-ISBN 978-90-481-9507-7
DOI 10.1007/978-90-481-9507-7
Springer Dordrecht Heidelberg London New York

© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2011
No part of this work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, microfilming, recording or otherwise, without written permission from the Publisher, with the exception of any material supplied specifically for the purpose of being entered and executed on a computer system, for exclusive use by the purchaser of the work.

Printed on acid-free paper

Springer is part of Springer Science+Business Media (www.springer.com)

Foreword to the English Edition

This volume resumes the work of the English translation of the great collective work the *Storia delle storie generali della filosofia*: the translation of Vol. I (*From Its Origins in the Renaissance to the 'Historia Philosophica'*) was in fact edited by Constance W.T. Blackwell and Philip Weller as far back as 1993, by now part of the previous century . . . The delay has been due to many reasons, not least of which was the long painful illness and death (on 22nd August, 2003) of Giovanni Santinello, the creator, coordinator, and animating spirit behind this great scientific and editorial project. Once the *Storia delle storie generali della filosofia* was finally completed in 2004 with the publication of the final two volumes (4/II: *L'età hegeliana. La storiografia filosofica nell'area neolatina, danubiana e russa*; 5: *Il secondo Ottocento*), work could now be resumed on the English translation, thanks to the backing of Kluwer publishers, which in the meantime had become part of the larger editorial group Springer.

The volume which we present here in its English translation has been entirely revised and corrected, and in some areas integrated, and the bibliography has been duly updated. It concerns a particularly significant (we could almost say 'strategic') phase in the development of modern philosophical historiography, which in the period between the second half of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century (from Descartes to Brucker, precisely) abandoned its philological and erudite guise and took on the form of a 'critical' and 'philosophical' history of philosophy, in a complex and problematic interchange with the concerns of modern philosophy (represented in particular by Descartes, Leibniz, and Locke), but also with the nascent *histoire de l'esprit humain*. Leaving aside the play on words suggested by formulas such as the 'philosophical history of philosophy' or the 'philosophy of the history of philosophy', we see a true change in intentions and methods which was fundamentally to influence modern cultural sensitivity and was to develop finally into the Hegelian apotheosis of the unity of philosophy and history of philosophy, but also, in another sense, into the methodology of 'intellectual history'.

It is our intention, *diis adiuvantibus*, to revise and translate the remaining volumes, in such a way as to make this unique and exceptional work available to a wider public of scholars, in its dual nature as a tool of consultation and as a

systematic contribution to the intellectual history of the modern age. Our warmest thanks are due first of all to the two translators, Hilary Siddons (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6) and Gwyneth Weston (Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8), who have carried out their task with great competence and sensitivity, and to Marco Forlivesi for his generous organizational and scholarly assistance in this endeavour. We would also like to thank Sarah Hutton, current director of the series 'Archives internationales d'histoire des idées – International Archives of the History of Ideas', for the interest which she has shown towards our proposal, and Maja S.M. de Keijzer for the cordiality and patience with which she has followed all the editorial stages. Last but not least, the work of translation has been made possible thanks to research funding from the Italian Ministry for Education and the financial backing of the Philosophy Departments of the Universities of Padua and Verona.

Padova, Italy Gregorio Piaia

Preface to the Italian Edition

'General histories of philosophy' are those works which consider the overall development of philosophical thought in time. For the classicists and the seventeenth-century erudits these histories were often what we would call today histories of ancient philosophy. Yet this does not mean that they were any less of a 'general' history of philosophy, both in their overall plan and the criteria with which they were formulated, and because at that time the ancient period could well represent the entire course of human thought, even though at times they did bear the addition *ad nostram usque aetatem*. With the same need for an overall, general plan, histories of 'sects' were also written (Stoicism, Atomism, Aristotelianism) and histories of problems (the varied fortune of metaphysics, from Aristotle to the Scholastic Doctors; histories of logic, ethics, atheism, and so on). Some of these treatments, for their general character and for the significance they had in the establishment of the genre of the history of philosophy, are examined in this present work. But most historiographical activity of the modern age was given over to much vaster works, which embrace the entire field of the problems of philosophy and the entire course of its history: from Georg Horn's *Historia philosophica* (1655) to André-François Boureau-Deslandes's *Histoire critique de la philosophie* (1737) and Jacob Brucker's *Historia critica philosophiae* (1742–1744), and then, to the even denser and more important works which appear in the Age of Kant, the Age of Hegel, and the second half of the nineteenth century.

A true literary genre is thus established and developed, the 'general history of philosophy', with its own precise problems (periodization, the interpretation of schools and approaches, methodology, etc.), tackled with a theoretical awareness (there is frequent reflection and discussion on the 'concept' of the history of philosophy, the methods with which to write it, and the results achieved by writers so far). We can trace the history of this 'genre', and this is what we intend to do with the present work: the history of philosophical historiography not in its entirety, but only the historiography produced by the specific genre defined as that of the 'general histories of philosophy'.

In our case too, as in analogous cases, when we speak of genus and species we cannot avoid abstractions, rather arbitrary generalizations, and the cutting out and isolating of a sector from a unitary and continuous field. Yet the extreme complexity

which a history of all historiography on philosophy would present compels us to set some limits to our research. This is not the only reason for the limits we have imposed on ourselves, however, since we believe that the genre we are dealing with is not the simple product of classificatory abstraction. In the modern age, from the Renaissance to the end of the nineteenth century, the problem of the unity (variously understood) of philosophy and its systematization had given rise, as a consequence, to the task of tracing its history in a relatively unitary and complete fashion, with the aim of deriving some total significance from it. There was a sort of 'philosophy of the history of philosophy' underlying these general designs, and the aim was not only didactic and scholastic (although this too still had its own significance – right from the beginnings, in the seventeenth century – in the context of the university teaching of philosophy).

With these warnings and limitations, but with a fairly precise and significant sense, we believe that our genre can be subjected to large-scale historiographical inquiry, and can produce interesting results and perspectives. This inquiry has taken shape in the present work and in that part of it still to be published, thanks to a group of researchers, teachers at the *Istituto di Storia della filosofia* of the University of Padua, who, to complete this volume and the one immediately following it, have worked in the context of the *Centro di studio per la storia della storiografia filosofica* of the *Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche*. This group is made up of Francesco Bottin, Mario Longo, Luciano Malusa, Giuseppe Micheli, Gregorio Piaia, Giovanni Santinello, and Ilario Tolomio.

From the origins of the Italian and European Renaissance up until the establishment of the genre of *historia philosophica*, around the mid seventeenth century in Holland, England, and Germany: this was the subject of the first volume. This present volume, entitled *From the Age of Descartes to Brucker*, is devoted to the first proper period of the history of our genre in France, Italy, and Germany, in the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century. The names Bayle and Deslandes, Valletta and Capasso, Buddeus and Brucker are well known, and their work is worthy of detailed analysis. Around them others flourished, and the landscape of the 'minor writers' is very varied, and, analysed it with care, contributes to clarifying the position of the 'great' writers.

The subject matter is divided into two parts, which are divided into chapters. Each chapter includes a series of authors of 'general histories', grouped according to the periods into which the history of the genre is divided. The *Introduction* which precedes each chapter has the aim of outlining the physiognomy of the period under consideration and connecting the 'histories' to the philosophical and historiographical activity of the period and the place. For each author, after a biographical profile and a list of their works, there is a 'file' which analyses the concept of the history of philosophy in the context of the appropriate speculative orientation, the contents of the 'history' being examined, the methodological criteria adopted, and the work's fortune. This analysis is conducted according to a framework which is repeated in an identical fashion for all the authors, articulated and divided into paragraphs as follows:

1. Successive number of the authors within the chapter.
1.1. Biography of the first author examined within the chapter.
1.2. List of his works.
1.3. Presentation of his concept of the history of philosophy.
1.4. Analysis of the work.
1.4.1. Presentation of the material structure of the work.
1.4.2. Periodization.
1.4.3. Fundamental historiographical theories.
1.4.4. Methodological choices.
1.5. Fortune of the work.
1.6. Bibliography on the author.

The rigidity with which the above scheme is applied aims at guaranteeing the homogeneity of the treatment in a collective work like this, and intends to give a certain objectivity to the narration. Indeed the framework used is not so much the product of a theoretical re-appropriation of the past, but aims to reflect the historical and theoretical situation which is the subject of these first two volumes. It corresponds, as we will see, to the problematic raised in some of the great 'histories' described here, especially to the theoretical themes of the *Dissertatio praeliminaris*, 'de natura, constitutione, usu mediisque historiae philosophicae', with which Brucker prefaced his *Historia critica*.

All chapters, therefore, are divided in the same way, except in two cases: in the first section of the second chapter, devoted to Bayle and his *Dictionnaire*, and in chapter VII devoted to Heumann (and Gerhard). Bayle and Heumann did not write true general histories of philosophy. Nevertheless their works could not be left out because of their theoretical and methodological relevance to the development of the genre, and the richness of their historiographical theories; therefore they have been included here, interrupting the uniformity of the framework.

Though linked to the first through many of its historical and theoretical presuppositions, this second volume enjoys a relative independence and its own unity of contents. Indeed it embraces the first phase in the development of the genre of the 'general histories of philosophy', once this genre had gained its identity around the middle of the seventeenth century in the emblematic works, Thomas Stanley's *History of Philosophy* (1655), Georg Horn's *Historia philosophica* (1655), and Jacob Thomasius's *Schediasma historicum* (1665), which issued from the complex movement of ideas characterising the thought of the Renaissance and the early seventeenth century, from the religious crisis of the Reformation and seventeenth-century historiographical erudition. The philosophical crisis experienced in Germany by *Schulphilosophie* thanks to Leibniz and the early Enlightenment, the imposition and spread of the Cartesian system in France and some Italian circles (such as Naples), but also its erosion thanks to Bayle and an ever greater interests in history (Vico): these are some of the characteristics of the second half of the seventeenth century and the first decades of the following century, which concur to condition the life and flourishing of the general histories of philosophy in this period.

The works produced in France present themselves as unequal in structure and fundamental inspiration: if an eclectic orientation prevails, in different forms, in the works of Du Hamel, Villemandy, Thomassin, and Pourchot, then Rapin and Coste offer two particularly significant examples of a historiography which is not erudite, but 'militant', inspired respectively by the opposing tendencies of Aristotelism and Cartesianism. In Bayle, the tight linking between a critico-erudite and a critico-speculative interest with regard to the great problems of philosophy and theology offers a fundamental contribution to the development of historiographical theory and practice. This sort of 'critical history of the philosophers', enclosed in the pages of the *Dictionnaire*, is the premise for Deslandes's *Histoire critique de la philosophie*, which in turn marks the first enlightenment approach to the genre of the history of philosophy.

Less complex, but not devoid of originality, is the Italian production. Here the Galilean tradition is preserved in Antonio Felice Marsili, giving rise to unexpected historiographical applications. The humanist tradition (Platonism in particular) and Dutch erudition are finalised in Valletta's *Istoria filosofica* to a defence of the new philosophy and the ideological and political objectives of the emerging Neapolitan 'civic class', while Gimma inaugurates a singular combination of an adhesion to scientific experimentalism, defence of scholastic theology, and the affirmation of the cultural primacy of Italy. The works of Capasso, and those of Cozzando and Corsini, relatively less important, on the other hand, are inspired by a prevalently didactic interest.

In Germany, after the crisis of Aristotelian scholasticism and in parallel with Leibniz's aim to reconcile the ancients and the moderns, philosophical historiography, which had given good proof of itself in Leibniz's teacher, Jacob Thomasius, increases and develops in the eclectic ideal of Christian Thomasius and Johann Franz Buddeus. Rejecting the authority of Aristotle, as every other form of sectarianism, the eclectic exalts the creative freedom to philosophize, and a new way of relating to the philosophers of the past, which is neither concordism nor sectarianism. The attitude of 'choice', directing one's thought in an anti-dogmatic direction, favours and fertilizes historiographical study. Besides this interest of a philosophical and theoretical nature, in order to explain these studies we must bear in mind that religious interest which had already deeply inspired the historiographical activity of the previous epoch. Now, Pietism accentuates the need to find in historical truth a tool to justify the ideal of anti-sectarian tolerance and, at the same time, to recover the genuine nature of the original inspiration behind the Reformation, blurred by the deformations and additions accumulated through history. It must not be forgotten, finally, that in Germany, more than in any other country, the history of philosophy played an important preparatory role in the teaching of philosophy. Much of the German production in this period is written for the school, both in the form of the vast repertory and the more modest dimensions of the textbook. Through these 'German' routes we arrive all the same at the first manifestations of the Enlightenment, which in Germany are linked not only to Wolff, but also to the great historiographical work of Brucker.

The relative homogeneity and independence of this volume is based, therefore, both on the characteristics of the period it examines, from Descartes to Brucker (the age of the crisis of European consciousness leading to the Enlightenment), and on the original elaboration of the theoretical concepts it deals with. In every work he writes and for every period of history he examines, the historian of philosophy, to a greater or lesser extent, reflects on the work he is carrying out, its presuppositions, and its methodology. But at certain moments theoretical reflection takes on a particular importance. It is legitimate to think, for example, of a possible periodization of the entire course of the history of the general histories of philosophy divided into the following ages, where the theoretical aspect is more intense and the names more significant: the age of Heumann and Brucker in the early eighteenth century; Kant and his age at the end of the century (Garve, Reinhold, Fülleborn, and others); the age of Hegel, and so on. Now, in our case, in Heumann – with the first review on the history of philosophy, the *Acta philosophorum* – and immediately after him with his heir Brucker we see the confluence, on the theoretical level, of the fruit of all the historiographical work so far completed, from the works of the erudite Stanley, Horn, and J. Thomasius onwards. When Heumann, in the complex *Einleitung zur Historia Philosophica* sets out the possibility of a *philosophical* history of history, he grasps the fundamental characteristic of the age, which goes from the great erudite writers to Brucker: both in their theoretical proposals and the historiographical works themselves.

The analysis of the vast subject matter of this volume, conceived and dealt with in a uniform way, has been carried out by Gregorio Piaia, author of the first part on the French and Italian areas, and by Mario Longo, author of the second part regarding the German area. The second part includes several contributions by Francesco Bottin (Chapter V, numbers 6, 7, and 8, devoted to Reimmann, Syrbius, and Walch), who has also contributed to reviewing the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century periodicals.

Our warmest thanks must go to colleagues and friends who, in Italy and abroad, have greatly helped us and provided us with numerous suggestions, as well as to the research institutes and libraries for their consultation and collaboration. Particular thanks are due to the directors of the following libraries, which we have consulted and used most: the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris, the *British Library* in London, the *Bayerische Staatsbibliothek* in Munich, the *Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek* in Hamburg, the *Universitätsbibliothek* in Leipzig, the *Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek* in Halle, the *Ehemalige Universitätsbibliothek* in Helmstedt, the *Stadtbücherei* in Düren, the *Oesterreichische Nationalbibliothek* in Vienna, the *Biblioteca Braidense* of Milan, the *Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana* of Venice, the *Biblioteca Universitaria* in Padua (together with the *Biblioteca Antoniana* and the *Biblioteca del Museo civico* of the same city), the *Biblioteca dell'Archiginnasio* in Bologna, and the *Biblioteca Nazionale 'Vittorio Emanuele III'* and the *Biblioteca Oratoriana dei Girolamini* in Naples.

We would also like to express our appreciation to the President of the *Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche* (CNR) and the President of the *Comitato nazionale*

scienze storiche, filosofiche e filologiche of the same *Consiglio* (where philosophy is represented by our colleagues professors Vittorio Mathieu and Paolo Rossi Monti, to whom we are particularly grateful) for having generously financed our research; and to the *Consiglio scientifico* of the *Centro di studi per la storia della storiografia filosofica* (and its president prof. Pietro Rossi and Director prof. Gabriele Giannantoni) who have included it in their own programme and have allowed the publication of this work.

Padova, Italy (1979) Giovanni Santinello

Contents

Part I The General Histories of Philosophy in France and in Italy 1650–1750

1 The Histories of Philosophy in France in the Age of Descartes 3
Gregorio Piaia
Introduction 3
Bibliographical Note 11
1.1 Jean de Launoy (1603–1678) 15
1.2 Jean-Baptiste Du Hamel (1624–1706) 21
1.3 René Rapin (1621–1687) 29
1.4 Pierre de Villemandy (1636/1637–1703) 50
1.5 Louis Thomassin (1619–1695) 59
1.6 Gilles Ménage (1613–1692) 72
1.7 Pierre Coste (1668–1747) 78
1.8 Edmond Pourchot (1651–1734) 88

2 Philosophical Historiography in France from Bayle to Deslandes . . 93
Gregorio Piaia
Introduction 93
Bibliographical Note 98
2.1 Pierre Bayle (1647–1706) 100
2.2 Pierre-Daniel Huet (1630–1721) 139
2.3 François Fénelon (1651–1715) 148
2.4 Dupont-Bertris 151
2.5 Jean Lévesque de Burigny (1692–1785) 157
2.6 Gilbert-Charles Le Gendre de Saint-Aubin (1688–1746) 166

3 A "Critical" History of Philosophy and the Early Enlightenment: André-François Boureau-Deslandes 177
Gregorio Piaia
Introduction 177

4 The General Histories of Philosophy in Italy in the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Century 213
Gregorio Piaia
Introduction 213
Bibliographical Note 226
4.1 Anton Felice Marsili (1651–1710) 228
4.2 Leonardo Cozzando (1620–1702) 240
4.3 Giuseppe Valletta (1636–1714) 246
4.4 Giacinto Gimma (1668–1735) 268
4.5 Giambattista Capasso (1683–1735) 278
4.6 Odoardo Corsini (1702–1765) 292

Part II The General Histories of Philosophy in Germany

5 The History of Philosophy from Eclecticism to Pietism 301
Francesco Bottin and Mario Longo
Introduction 301
Bibliographical Note 310
5.1 Christian Thomasius (1655–1728) 315
5.2 Joh. Wilhelm Zierold (1669–1731) 323
5.3 Barthold Feind (1678–1721) 331
5.4 Johann Christoph Wolf (1683–1739) 337
5.5 Joh. Franz Buddeus (1667–1729) 343
5.6 Jakob Friederich Reimmann (1668–1743) 373
5.7 Johann Jakob Syrbius (1674–1738) 378
5.8 Johann Georg Walch (1693–1775) 380

6 The Theory of "Historia Philosophica" 387
Mario Longo
Introduction 387
Bibliographical Note 392
6.1 Ephraim Gerhard (1682–1718) 393
6.2 Christoph August Heumann (1681–1764) 399

7 Text Books on the History of Philosophy from Heumann to Brucker 433
Mario Longo
Introduction 433
Bibliographical Note 439
7.1 Friedrich Gentzken (1679–1757) 440
7.2 Lorenz Reinhard (1700–1752) 450
7.3 Joh. Gottlieb Heineccius (1681–1741) 457
7.4 Adrian Lamezan (1706–1748) 463
7.5 Karl Gerhard Wilhelm Lodtmann (1720–1755) 469

8 A "Critical" History of Philosophy and the Early Enlightenment: Johann Jacob Brucker 477
Mario Longo
Introduction 477
8.1 Johann Jakob Brucker (1696–1770) 479

Name Index 579

Index of "Nations", Philosophical Schools and Sects 601

Contributors

Francesco Bottin Università di Padova, Dipartimento di Filosofia, Piazza Capitaniato 3, 35139 Padova, Italy, francesco.bottin@unipd.it

Mario Longo Università di Verona, Dipartimento di Filosofia, Pedagogia e Psicologia, Lungadige Porta Vittoria 17, 37132 Verona, Italy, mario.longo@univr.it

Gregorio Piaia Università di Padova, Dipartimento di Filosofia, Piazza Capitaniato 3, 35139 Padova, Italy, gregorio.piaia@unipd.it

List of Abbreviations

(a) *Periodicals, Bibliographies, and Reference Works (Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries)*

AE *Acta eruditorum* , 50 Vols. (Leipzig, 1682–1731).

AE Suppl. *Actorum eruditorum quae Lipsiae publicantur supplementa*, 10 Vols. (Leipzig, 1692–1734).

BA *Bibliothèque Angloise, ou Histoire littéraire de la Grande-Bretagne*, eds. M. de La Roche and A. de La Chapelle, 17 Vols. (Amsterdam, 1717–1728).

BAM *Bibliothèque ancienne et moderne*, ed. J. Le Clerc, 29 Vols. (Amsterdam and The Hague, 1714–1727).

BB *Bibliothèque Britannique, ou Histoire des savans de la Grande-Bretagne*, ed. M. de La Roche, 25 Vols. (The Hague, 1733–1747).

BCh *Bibliothèque choisie*, eds. J. Le Clerc, 28 Vols. (Amsterdam, 1703–1713).

BCr *Bibliothèque critique, ou Recueil de diverses pièces critiques, dont la plûpart ne sont point imprimées, ou ne se trouvent que très-difficilement*, ed. M. de Sainjore, 4 Vols. (Paris and Amsterdam, 1708–1710).

BF *Bibliothèque Française, ou Histoire littéraire de la France*, eds. D.-F. Camusat, H. Du Sauzet, C.-P. Goujet, and F. Granet, 39 Vols. (Amsterdam, 1723–1746).

BG *Bibliothèque Germanique, ou Histoire littéraire de l'Allemagne, de la Suisse et des pays du Nord*, eds. J. Lenfant, I. de Beausobre, P.-E. de Mauclerc, and S. Formey, 50 Vols. (Berlin, 1720–1740).

BI *Bibliothèque Italique, ou Histoire littéraire de l'Italie*, eds. L. Bourguet, A. Ruchat, Ch.-G. Loys de Bochat, and A. Du Lignon, 18 Vols. (Geneva, 1728–1734).

BR *Bibliothèque raisonnée des ouvrages des savans de l'Europe*, eds. A. de La Chapelle, J. Barbeyrac, and P. Desmaizeaux, 52 Vols. (Amsterdam, 1728–1753).

Brucker J.J. Brucker, *Historia critica philosophiae*, 4 Vols. in 5 (Leipzig, 1742-1744); *Appendix* (Leipzig, 1767; facs. repr. of the whole, Hildesheim and New York, 1975).

BUH *Bibliothèque universelle et historique*, ed. J. Le Clerc, 26 Vols. (Amsterdam, 1686–1702).

ES *L'Europe sçavante*, eds. Th. de Saint-Hyacinthe and J. Lévesque de Burigny, 12 Vols. (The Hague, 1718–1720).

GLF *Giornale de' letterati*, 6 Vols. (Florence, 1742–1753).

GLI *Giornale de' letterati d'Italia*, eds. A. Zeno and P.C. Zeno, 40 Vols. (Venice, 1710–1727, 1733, 1739).

Heinsius W. Heinsius, *Allgemeines Bücher-Lexikon* [. . .] *1700-1810*, 4 Vols. (Leipzig, 1812–1813; facs. repr. Graz, 1962).

Heumann *Acta philosophorum, das ist: gründliche Nachrichten aus der Historia philosophica*, ed. Ch. A. Heumann, 18 fascs. in 3 Vols. (Halle, 1715–1727).

HOS *Histoire des ouvrages des sçavans*, eds. H. Basnage, 24 Vols. (Rotterdam, 1687–1709).

HSS *Historia sapientiae et stultitiae*, ed. Ch. Thomasius, 3 Vols. (Halle, 1693).

JL *Journal littéraire*, eds. A.-H. Sallengre, Thémiseul de Saint-Hyacinthe, and J. Van Effen, 24 Vols. (The Hague, 1713–1722, 1729–1736).

Jöcher Ch. G. Jöcher, *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon*, 4 Vols. (Leipzig, 1750-51, facs. repr. Hildesheim, 1960–1961).

Jöcher (Erg.) J.Ch. Adelung and H.W. Rotermund, *Fortsetzung und Ergänzungen zu Christian Gottlieb Jöchers allgemeinen Gelehrten-Lexicon*, 7 Vols. (Leipzig, Delmenhorst, and Bremen, 1784–1897; facs. repr. Hildesheim, 1960–1961).

Jonsius J. Jonsius, *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae libri IV*, 2nd edn, rev. and enl., ed. J. Ch. Dornius, with a Preface by B.G. Struve, 2 Vols. (Jenae, 1716; facs. repr. Düsseldorf, 1968).

JS *Journal des sçavans*, founded by D. de Sallo, 170 Vols. to 1753 (Amsterdam, 1665–).

LET *Lettres sur quelques écrits de ce temps*, ed. E. Fréron, 13 Vols. (Geneva and London [Paris], 1749–1754).

MB *Miscellanea Berolinensia ad incrementum scientiarum*, 7 Vols. (Berlin, 1710–1743).

ML *Miscellanea Lipsiensia*, ed. J.F. Buddeus, 12 Vols. (Leipzig, 1716–1723).

MLGB *Mémoires littéraires de la Grande-Bretagne*, ed. M. de La Roche, 16 Vols. (The Hague, 1720–1724).

MT *Mémoires de Trévoux* (*Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des sciences et des arts*), 878 pts. in 265 Vols. (Trévoux, Lyons, and Paris, 1701–1767).

NAE *Nova acta eruditorum*, 43 Vols. (Leipzig, 1732–1776).

NAE Suppl. *Ad nova acta eruditorum quae Lipsiae publicantur supplementa*, 8 Vols. (Leipzig, 1735–1757).

NB *Neue Bibliothec oder Nachricht und Urtheile von neuen Büchern...*, ed. N.J. Gundling, 10 Vols. (Halle, 1709–1721).

NBG *Nouvelle bibliothèque Germanique*, eds. S. Formey and du Peyrard, 26 Vols. (Amsterdam, 1746–1759).

Nicéron J.P. Nicéron, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des hommes illustres dans la République des Lettres*, 43 Vols. (Paris, 1729–1745).

NL *Nouvelles littéraires*, ed. H. Du Sauzet et al., 12 Vols. (The Hague, 1715–1720).

NRL *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, ed. P. Bayle until Febr. 1687, 56 Vols. (Amsterdam, 1684–1718).

OS *Observationes selectae ad rem litterariam spectantes*, eds. Ch. Thomasius and J. F. Buddeus, 11 Vols. (Halle, 1700–1705).

PhT *Philosophical Transactions* [. . .] *sive observationes* [. . .] *de rebus physicis maxime et mathematicis*, 50 Vols. (London and Oxford, 1665–1757).

Schmersahl E.F. Schmersahl, *Historie der W elt-Weisheit überhaupt. Nebst einem Vorbericht von den bisherigen Verfassern dieser Historie* (Zelle, 1744).

Stolle G. Stolle, *Introductio in historiam litterariam in gratiam cultorum elegantiorum litterarum et philosophiae conscripta* (Jena, 1728).

Struve B.G. Struvius, *Bibliothecae philosophicae Struvianae emendatae, continuatae atque ultra dimidiam partem auctae a* L.M. Kahlio, 2 Vols. (Göttingen, 1740; facs. repr. Düsseldorf, 1970).

(b) *Modern Scholarly Literature: Bibliographical Surveys, Biographical Dictionaries, Periodicals, Critical Studies (Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries)*

ADB *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*, 56 Vols. (Leipzig and Munich, 1875–1912).

Bouillier F. Bouillier, *Histoire de la philosophie cartésienne*, 2 Vols., 3th edn (Paris, 1868; facs. repr. Hildesheim and New York, 1972).

Braun L. Braun, *Histoire de l'histoire de la philosophie* (Paris, 1973; Strasbourg, 1995).

BUAM *Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne*, 52 Vols. (Paris, 1811–1862).

DBF *Dictionnaire de biographie française*, 20 Vols. to date (Paris, 1933–).

DBI *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, 70 Vols. to date (Rome, 1960–).

Degérando J.-M. Degérando, *Histoire comparée dei systèmes de philosophie, relativement aux principes des connaissances humaines*, 2 edn, rev. and enl., 4 Vols. (Paris, 1822–1823).

Del Torre M.A. Del Torre, *Le origini moderne della storiografia filosofica* (Florence, 1976).

DNB *Dictionary of National Biography*, 22 Vols. (London, 1908–1909).

DSPh *Dictionnaire des sciences philosophiques*, 6 Vols. (Paris, 1844–1852).

DThC *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, 15 Vols. (Paris, 1909–1972).

Freyer J. Freyer, *Geschichte der Geschichte der Philosophie im 18. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1912).

Garin E. Garin, *Storia della filosofia italiana*, 3 Vols. (Turin, 1978).

GCFI *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana* (Rome and Florence, 1920–).

Gueroult M. Gueroult, *Dianoématique*, I: *Histoire de l'histoire de la philosophie*, Vols. 1–2 (Paris, 1984–1988).

Gumposch V.Ph. Gumposch, *Die philosophische Literatur der Deutschen von 1400 bis auf unsere Tage* (Regensburg, 1851; facs. repr. Düsseldorf, 1967).

Hazard P. Hazard, *The European Mind (1680–1715)* (Cleveland and London, 1967).

Labrousse E. Labrousse, *Pierre Bayle*, I: *Du pays de Foix à la cité d'Erasme*; II: *Hétérodoxie et rigorisme*, 2 Vols. (The Hague, 1963–1964).

LThK *Lexicon für Theologie und Kirche*, 10 Vols. (Freiburg, 1957–1967).

Models *Models of the History of Philosophy*, I: *From its Origins in the Renaissance to the "historia philosophica"*, ed. G. Santinello, english eds. C.W.T. Blackwell and Ph. Weller (Dordrecht-Boston-London, 1993).

NDB *Neue deutsche Biographie*, 20 Vols. to date (Berlin, 1953–).

Rak M. Rak, *La parte istorica. Storia della filosofia e libertinismo erudito* (Naples, 1971).

REPThK *Real-Encyklopädie fur protestantische Theologie und Kirche*, 22 Vols. (Hamburg, 1854–1968).

Sommervogel *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, new edn by C. Sommervogel, Pt. I, Vols. I–X (Brussels and Paris, 1890–1909); Pt. II, Vol. XI

(Paris, 1932); Suppl., Vol. XII (Toulouse, 1911–1930; facs. repr. of the whole, Louvain, 1960).

Spink J.S. Spink, *French Free Thought from Gassendi to Voltaire* (London, 1960).

Tennemann W. Tennemann, *A Manual of the History of Philosophy*, trans. by A. Johnson, rev. by J.R. Morell (London, 1852) [= *Grundriss der Philosophie für den akademischen Unterricht* (Leipzig, 1812)].

Wundt M. Wundt, *Die deutsche Schulphilosophie im Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (Tübingen, 1945; facs. repr. Hildesheim, 1964).

Part I
The General Histories of Philosophy in France and in Italy 1650–1750

Chapter 1
The Histories of Philosophy in France in the Age of Descartes

Gregorio Piaia

Introduction

The panorama of French culture in the second half of the seventeenth century is characterised by the presence of numerous works which, for varying reasons and with varying degrees of approximation, can be ranked among the "general histories of philosophy". At the same time, however, we can observe a failure to develop a *historia philosophica* understood as a literary genre in its own right, built on a philological basis with a well-established purpose, contents, and method, which asserted itself in the 1650s in the neighbouring cultural areas of England, with Thomas Stanley, and the Low Countries, with Hornius and Vossius. The reasons for this state of affairs, whose most obvious characteristic is the absence of an erudite philosophical historiography (leaving aside de Launoy and Ménage, whose works have a more restricted field than that of a general history of philosophy), are to be sought in several general aspects of French culture in this period, and in the first place in the radical division which Descartes established between philosophical research and its past. This fracture translated into an opposition between "truth", a domain of clear and distinct ideas, and "history", with its mass of disconnected opinions devoid of any obvious links. In so far as its being based on a rigorous method, the exercise of philosophy clearly parts company with a historical knowledge of the ancient philosophers: "We will never manage to be philosophers if we have read all the arguments made by Plato and Aristotle, but have not been able to formulate any certain judgement with regard to the arguments put forward: in truth, we will show that we have learnt not the sciences, but history" ("Regulae ad directionem ingenii", iii, in *Oeuvres de Descartes*, eds. Ch. Adam and P. Tannery (Paris, 1897–1910), Vol. X, p. 367).

This attitude is common to other great thinkers of the period; in the preface to his *Traité sur le vide* (1647) Pascal condemns excessive respect for antiquity and

G. Piaia (✉)
Università di Padova, Dipartimento di Filosofia, Piazza Capitaniato 3, 35139 Padova, Italy
e-mail: gregorio.piaia@unipd.it

G. Piaia, G. Santinello (eds.), *Models of the History of Philosophy*, International Archives of the History of Ideas, Archives internationales d'histoire des idées,
DOI 10.1007/978-90-481-9507-7_1, © Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2011

distinguishes between two types of science: "some depend only on the memory and are purely historical: indeed their aim is to knowing what authors have written; others depend only on reasoning and have as their object the search for and discovery of hidden truths. Those of the first type are limited, as are the books in which they are contained", while the latter are destined to progress, since reason is "incessantly productive and its inventions can be infinite and unceasing" (*Oeuvres complètes*, ed. J. Chevalier (Paris, 1954), pp. 529–530). The opposition between truth and history is even clearer in Malebranche, who contrasts the *science d'esprit* with the *science de mémoire* of those who attempt to interpret correctly the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle. Such people "know nothing but historical facts and not evident truths, and they are historians rather than true philosophers, men who do not think at all but who are able to recount the thoughts of others". Historical research is thus judged to be superfluous compared with the need for and the possibility of grasping with reason that which is true in itself: "It seems to me that it is pretty useless, for those who live in the present, to know that there was once a man called Aristotle, whether this man [effectively] wrote the books that bear his name, and whether he means a certain thing or something else in a certain passage from his works; this cannot make a man either wiser or happier, but it is very important to know whether what he says is in itself true or false. Hence it is useless to know what Aristotle believed regarding the immortality of the soul, even though it is very useful to know that the soul is immortal . . ." (*De la recherche de la vérité*, II, ii, 4–5, ed. G. Rodis-Lewis (Paris, 1991^3), Vol. I, pp. 285 and 290). Even though they were aimed in the first place at the followers of the ancient philosophers and in particular the Peripatetics, these judgements greatly undervalue philosophical historiography, which comes to be excluded in principle from the interests of the *nouvelle philosophie*. A consequence of this is the chronological gap which exists between the rapid diffusion of Cartesianism (which became the dominant philosophy in France in the second half of the seventeenth century, despite resistance from the universities) and its first results in producing general histories of philosophy, which do not appear until the end of the century with Pierre Coste's brief *Discours sur la philosophie* (1691).

The lack of interest which the great French thinkers of the seventeenth century had for the study of the philosophies of the past is not shared by all of their followers, however. Significant in this regard is the attitude of the Oratorian Bernard Lamy, a Cartesian and a close friend of Malebranche, who recognised the validity – on a didactic plane at least – of a historical approach to philosophy, and revealed himself to be well-informed on modern histories of philosophy. In the section of his *Entretiens sur les sciences* (1684) dedicated to the philosophers, Lamy takes up Malebranche's distinction between philosophy, based on the reason which everyone possesses, and history, based on authority and books, which are mostly "an obstacle to true science". Immediately after, however, he observes that books are not useless and can serve as a guide for those beginning to study philosophy, "since for every two or three people who, having rid themselves of all the opinions that they had learnt elsewhere and having given up books, have successfully reached the truth in the deepest levels of their own

selves, there is an infinite number of those who, having insisted on walking without a guide, have lost their way and have succumbed to a thousand reveries". Those who study in the universities and are not able to use their reason correctly should therefore use their memory "to remember the sentiments of the famous philosophers", who teach us the "general seeds of the sciences". From this perspective, which certainly does not concern pure research, but merely teaching, "it is useful not to ignore the History of Philosophy, that is to say, who the illustrious philosophers were and what their doctrine was. Why then [. . .] do we not collect this History to make students read it in Schools? It would be a book to write, but this work must be written with intelligence, in such a way as to allow us to discover the origin of all these opinions, that is to say, how these philosophers, either by following the initial knowledge that Nature has given us, or the prejudices of childhood and the people, have come to hold these opinions". Further on, Lamy notes that the idea of writing a history of philosophy is easy to carry out given the abundance of works on the subject, and he shows that he clearly understands the distinction between the "general" history of philosophy and the history of the individual schools: after quoting Diogenes Laertius, Plutarch, and Vossius, he observes that "Hornius has made a History of Philosophy in general, as has P. Thomassin. There are writers who have applied themselves to clarifying some of the ancient Sects in particular, as Marsilius Ficinus has done for the Platonists, Lipsius for the Stoics, Gassendi for that of Epicurus, and La Mothe Le Vayer for that of the Sceptics" (B. Lamy, *Entretiens sur les Science, dans lesquels on apprend comment l'on doit étudier les Sciences, et s'en server pour se fair l'esprit juste, et le coeur droit*, eds. F. Girbal and P. Clair (Paris, 1966), pp. 237–239, 242–243; see also pp. 247–263, which reproduces a *Discours sur la philosophie* added to the 2nd edition of the *Entretiens* [1694], providing a general outline of the development of philosophy from Adam onwards and exalting the superiority of modern philosophers, in particular Galileo and Descartes, over Aristotle and the ancients).

If from the point of view of its immediate effects the influence of Cartesianism on the genre of the history of philosophy was negative or at least reductive, in a broader and more long-term perspective its repercussions on the development of the "genre" were profound and decisive: the criticism of the "sects" in the name of the freedom to philosophize, the awareness of the progress of human knowledge and the advent of a new era, the need for methodological rigour, and the desire for a systematic approach were to have an incisive influence on the way of conceiving and practising the history of philosophy, and contributed to the eclipse of traditional doxography and even Stanley and Horn's *historia philosophica* itself. In particular its recognition of a truth of history besides the truths of reason and faith, expressed clearly in the last part of the *Logique de Port-Royal*, is the premise for an epistemological grounding to historical knowledge which was to be put into practice by Bayle and through him by Heumann.[1] Without the contribution of Cartesian rationalism the evolution

[1] *La logique ou l'art de penser* (Paris, 1662; facs. repr. Geneva, 1972), Part IV, Chapter XI, pp. 433–434: "Et neanmoins [. . .] il y a des choses que nous ne connoissons que par une

towards a "critical" history of philosophy would not have taken place. From this point of view, Bayle, Heumann, Deslandes, and Brucker are all, in their various ways, descendents of the method and the spirit of Cartesianism.

Moving on to considerations of a non-philosophical nature, another factor which hampered the development of an erudite philosophical historiography in France was the "divorce" between history and erudition which has been analysed in detail by Paul Hazard. The huge amount of research carried out by erudite churchmen and laymen in the second half of the seventeenth century only marginally touched on the history of philosophy. Two of the writers examined in this chapter, de Launoy and Rapin, clearly express, from different positions, the gap between history and erudition: the former defines his work on the fortune of Aristotle as a simple collection of documents rather than a *historia* understood in a Ciceronian sense, while Rapin excludes from his general history of philosophy an erudite approach that would have made it unappealing to the public at large, and at times pays more attention to the literary aspect than the reliability of his historical facts. A third factor to take into consideration is the merely accessory role that the teaching of the history of philosophy played in French school and university curricula, while in Dutch and later in German universities the function of the history of philosophy was recognised at an institutional level, giving rise to the production of homogeneous and well-characterised text books.

The fluid situation determined by the three factors illustrated above has also led us to examine works which do not in themselves possess all the requirements of a "general history of philosophy", but which represent a number of fundamental stages in the formation of this "genre" in the French cultural area. Out of the nine works examined here only five in fact cover the entire historical span of human thought; the others are sectional and concern barbarian and Greek philosophy (Thomassin), the fortune of Aristotle (de Launoy), and the history of women philosophers (Ménage). That furthest from the scheme of modern *historia philosophica* is the work by Du Hamel, in which a discussion of a doxographical nature is inserted organically into a theoretical context. Lacking a univocal and consolidated model and often linked to a framework inherited from ancient philosophical historiography, these works are highly diversified both in their authors' profession and the readership to which the works themselves were destined, and in their methodological approach and the system thought which inspires them. Apart from Villemandy and Pourchot, who were university teachers with a well-defined professional role, the other authors were in fact "men of letters" of wide-ranging theological, philosophical, historical, and literary interests, who for the most part lacked a rigorously philological or academic philosophical training, which we find, on the other hand, in the Dutch or German cultural area. We have two illustrious exponents of erudition

---

foy humaine, que nous devons tenir pour aussi certaines et aussi indubitables, que si nous en avions les demonstrations mathematiques. [. . .] Il faudroit de mesme avoir perdu le sens, pout douter si jamais Cesar, Pompée, Ciceron, Virgile one esté; et si ce ne sont point des personages feints, comme ceux des Amadis. . ." (analogous considerations were made by Bayle: cf. below, Chapter 2, para 2.1.3.2.).

and philology in de Launoy and Ménage, who commented on Diogenes Laertius, but their works are an exception with respect to the widespread populist tendency which animates the histories of philosophy of this period and which is expressed in the literary form of the *abrégé* or the *discours*. It is a tendency which often verges on philosophical and literary *amusement*, as in the case of Laurent Bordelon's *Théatre philosophique*, where thirty or so dialogues between philosophers, in the style of Lucianus, are furnished with 60 files containing information on the life, death, deeds, and opinions of the philosophers in question, taken not only from the ancient *vitae philosophorum* but also from contemporary authors such as La Mothe Le Vayer, Rapin, and Thomassin. The thinkers who make their appearance in this theatre are mostly ancient, but there are also nine moderns (Paracelsus, Cornelius Agrippa, G. Postel, Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, Galileo, Campanella, Gassendi, and Descartes) and two medievals (Averroes and Arnaldus de Villanova), as well as two Orientals, Zoroaster and Confucius (*Théatre philosophique, sur lequel on represente par des Dialogues dans les Champes Elisées les philosophes anciens et modernes, et où l'on rapporte ensuite leurs opinions, leurs reparties, leurs sentences, et les plus remarquables actions de leur vie*, par Mr. Bordelon (Paris: chez Claude Barbin et Jean Musier, 1692), 12°, xxii–445 pp.); the second edition which came out the following year, includes a dialogue between 19 "women philosophers", probably inspired by Ménage's *Historia mulierum philosopharum*).

French culture of the second half of the seventeenth and above all the eighteenth century is distinguished by its being directed towards the general public rather than specialists or academics, thus necessitating the use of the French language rather than the traditional language of the learned. This tendency is also reflected in philosophical historiography, where the most wide-ranging works and those most linked to the contemporary cultural debate were written in French and not in Latin: the *Réflexions sur la philosophie ancienne et moderne* and the *Comparaison de Platon et d'Aristote* by the Jesuit René Rapin were destined for a public of magistrates, men of letters, and *honnêtes gens* (such as those who frequented the *Académie Lamoignon*) and tend to be brilliant and populist in nature, even though their fundamental concern is of an apologetic religious nature. The *Méthode d'étudier et d' enseigner la philosophie* by the Oratorian Louis Thomassin has a "didactic" goal, in the widest sense of the term, and is part of a plan for the direction of conscience on a religious and cultural plane analogous to that of Rapin, even though the philosophical inspiration of the two works is different. Coste's *Discours sur la philosophie* in turn functions as a historical introduction to a systematic treatment which sets itself the task of spreading Cartesian thought to the learned public, and is hence written in French, in contrast to that academic production in Latin which Descartes himself had looked on with indifference or scorn, appealing directly to the common reader and to *opinion*. Besides these histories of philosophy it is worth mentioning, for its populist aim, the *Histoire des études* outlined by Claude Fleury at the beginning of his *Traité du choix et de la méthode des etudes*, written in 1675 "to serve in the education of a young boy": following a periodisation akin to that used in the history of philosophy, the work reviews the disciplines studied by the Greeks, the Romans, the Christians, the Franks, the Arabs, the Scholastics, and the medieval universities,

and concludes with the "renewal of literary studies" after the fall of Constantinople. The outcome is an overall history of the disciplines studied in the schools in different periods, in which space is also devoted to philosophy (C. Fleury, *Traité du choix et de la méthode des études*, Nouvelle édition corrigée (Paris: chez Pierre-Jean Mariette, 1740 [1st ed. 1686]), 12°, pp. 2–83; this work, which was reprinted several times and translated into Castilian, also includes a *Discours sur Platon*, pp. 291–348, which dates to 1670 and was republished in the nineteenth century in J.-F. Nourrisson, *Exposition de la théorie platonicienne des idées* (Paris, 1858); both the *Traité* and the *Discours sur Platon* are mentioned in Jonsius, p. 184).

Moving on now to the various methodological approaches of the works examined in this chapter, we must note above all how Diogenes Laertius' model of the "lives", organised within a framework of sects, is taken up in the *Historia mulierum philosopharum* by Ménage, who – as well as being an editor and commentator on Laertius – was a resolute supporter of the superiority of the *anciens*. For his part de Launoy divides the history of Aristotelianism into eight periods and adopts a method of compilation based on official medieval documents and a large mass of sources. Du Hamel sets out the *placita de principiis rerum* of the Platonists, the Aristotelians, the Epicureans, and the Cartesians, with the aim – which is already evident in the title of the work, *De consensu veteris et novae philosophiae* (1663) – of taking from them that which is most "verisimilar" and reconciling the most divergent opinions. Villemandy's *Manuductio* (1674) also adheres to a programmatic eclecticism, reducing the great schools of thought to three (Aristotelianism, Epicureanism, Cartesianism) and separating a comparison of their theories from the historical discussion, which is a form of introduction to the systematic study of philosophy and places more stress on periodisation and division into sects than on biographical and doctrinal aspects.[2] Thanks to its speculative premises, Thomassin's *Histoire de la naissance et du progrès de la philosophie* (1685) has a more intrinsic unity to its discussion, leaving in the background the rigid external framework of the schools and the lives; the exposition of the teachings of the ancient philosophers is only rapidly sketched out, however, since it is fully dealt with in books II and III of *La méthode pour étudier la philosophie* of which the *Histoire* constitutes the first, introductory book. In his *Réflexions* (1676), Rapin clearly distinguishes between reflection on philosophy "in general" (in which he outlines the historical development of the schools and expresses value judgements on the *caractère* of the great philosophers, omitting to set out their teachings) from reflections on philosophy "in particular", where he reviews the teachings of the ancients and the moderns in the

[2]The theme of a comparison between the "placita veterum et recentiorum" (which almost always boils down to a comparison between the doctrines of Aristotle, Epicurus, and Descartes) also inspires the *Lexicon rationale* by Étienne Chauvan, a dictionary of philosophical and scientific terms, which includes short historical entries devoted to the greatest ancient and modern philosophers (*Lexicon rationale sive thesaurus philosophicus ordine alphabetico digestus, in quo vocabula omnia philosophica, variasque illorum acceptiones, juxta cum Veterum, tum Recentiorum placita, explicare; et universe quae lumine naturali sciri possunt, non tam concludere, quam recludere, conatur* Stephanus Chauvin (Rotterdam: apud Petrum van der Slaart, 1692; facs. repr. Düsseldorf, 1967).

fields of logic, ethics, physics, and metaphysics. This dichotomy between a general history of philosophy and the history of the individual philosophical disciplines reveals the persistent influence of models codified by ancient historiography (history of the schools, *placita philosophorum* . . .) not yet integrated into a unitary and comprehensive discussion. This division is overcome in Coste's *Discours sur la philosophie, où l'on voit en abrégé l'histoire de cette science*, where the division into four disciplines (logic, metaphysics, physics, and ethics) is placed within the general historical discussion, which revolves round the leaders of the major schools. In this way, albeit in the more modest form of the *abrégé*, we come close to the by now dominant model of Dutch *historia philosophica* which Coste must have known well since his *Discours* was written during his stay in the Low Countries.

As for our authors' theoretical orientation, we have already spoken of how the first history of philosophy openly inspired by Cartesianism was the *Discours sur la philosophie*, which came out in one of the periods of the greatest fortune of Cartesianism: these were the years of the raging controversy between Régis and Huet (on which see below, Chapter 2, para 2.2.2) and the printing, among others, of Adrien Baillet's *Vie de M. Des-Cartes* (Paris, 1691). Most of the writers considered here, however, can be placed in the margins of the *nouvelle philosophie*, adopting an eclectic position which was widespread in certain sectors of the French intellectual world, above all academic. This is the case of Du Hamel, Villemandy (whose eclecticism developed as a form of anti-scepticism), and Pourchot; even de Launoy, though he does not make value judgements in his work, seems to tend in this direction, while in Thomassin eclecticism takes on the connotations of a Platonic Christian syncretism. The gap between Cartesianism and work on the history of philosophy corresponds therefore to an eclecticism which we also find in Dutch historiography and which we will meet again later (with a higher degree of theoretical elaboration, as in the distinction between "eclecticism" and "syncretism") in German philosophical historiography of the early eighteenth century (see below, Chapter 5). Nor is there any lack of clearly hostile positions to the *nouvelle philosophie*, linked to the tradition of the *veteres*, such as that of the Aristotelian Rapin; the same tendency is also shared by Pierre Godart, who added a brief outline entitled *De philosophorum sectis* to the introduction to his treatise on philosophy, in which the development of thought culminates with Aristotle, defined a "genius and interpreter of nature", while innovators (Lull, Gassendi, Descartes) are treated with scorn (Petri Godartii *Lexicon philosophicum. Item, accuratissima totius philosophiae summa* (Parisiis: apud Viduam Ioannis de la Caille . . ., 1675 [Ist ed.: 1666]), 8°, Vol. I, pp. 6–8).

Huet's adherence to scepticism can also be understood in an anti-Cartesian light: the history of philosophy which he outlines in his *Traité philosophique* will be examined in the following chapter, since it was not printed until after the author's death, in 1722. But the abbé Simon Foucher, canon of Dijon cathedral, also turned to scepticism to combat Malebranche's "dogmatism" and in this context wrote a history of the ancient Academics. He distinguishes between the common (*vulgaire*) opinion of this philosophy and the "way of philosophizing" proper to Plato and the Academics, which must not be attributed to any "particular sect": in reality this is "the oldest of all and the first. It could indeed be called the philosophy of all ages, because, since

it consists of searching, it is not unreasonable to attribute to it all the good, solid results which the inquiry of all the centuries has been able to achieve" (S. Foucher, *Dissertations sur la "Recherche de la vérité", contenant l'histoire et les principes de la philosophie des Académiciens, avec plusieurs réflexions sur les sentimens de M. Descartes* (Paris: J. Anisson, 1693), 12°, pp. 3–4; the *Histoire des académiciens* is contained in book I, pp. 1–72, and is divided into 16 chapters; the last 5 are devoted to the relationship between the positions of the Academics and the doctrines of Varro, Cicero, Augustine, and Descartes).

Besides fideistic and Christian scepticism we must also mention the scepticism proper to erudite *libertinisme*, which has many links with philosophical historiography. Criticism of superstitions, myths, and legends in fact makes use of "an analysis of ancient classical pagan thought which is to be connected to a free, modern interpretation of reality", leading to a revival of "names and doctrines rarely considered in the historiographical tradition of the period" (Del Torre, pp. 34–35). In Gabriel Naudé's famous *Apologie*, numerous ancient and modern philosophers make their appearance, from Pythagoras and Socrates to the naturalists of the Renaissance, and the author hints at a cyclical vision of history to explain the "insensible decline" which peripatetic philosophy is destined to undergo, and hence the inevitable success of the *novateurs* who aim to "destroy this great edifice which Aristotle and more than twelve thousand of his interpreters have laboured to build in such a long succession of years" (G. Naudé, *Apologie pour tous les grands personnages qui one esté faussement soupçonnez de magie*, The Hague 1653 [Ist ed.: Paris 1625], pp. 331–332). Another famous libertine, François de La Mothe Le Vayer, must be mentioned for his dialogues on ancient scepticism (also quoted, as we have seen, by Lamy) and above all for his history of ancient ethics contained in the second part of the work *De la vertu des payens* (1642). In it the author examines the leaders of the ancient Greek schools, beginning with Socrates, "father common to all philosophers", and extends his inquiry to Confucius (defined as "the Socrates of China"), Seneca, and Julian the Apostate, to whom he devotes much space (F. de La Mothe Le Vayer, *De la vertu des payens*, in *Oeuvres* (Paris, 1662^3), *in folio*, I, pp. 584–705; cf. Jonsius, p. 183; NB, II, 1711, pp. 386–387). It would be worth considering in its own right that clandestine erudition which had a wide manuscript circulation in the 17th and 18th centuries, with the aim of clarifying the hidden background of the libertine Deslandes. Works of this type are, for example, the *Theophrastus redivivus* (dated 1659, eds. G. Canziani and G. Paganini, Florence, 1981–1982, 2 vols) and the *Opinions des anciens sur la nature de l'âme*, written in the years before 1722.

In such a varied panorama, it is possible to identify a single key (to the interpretation of the histories of philosophy which appeared in late seventeenth-century France) in the *querelle des anciens et des modernes*, which involved and enflamed the entire French intellectual world and had precise repercussions on the history of philosophy. The most emblematic cases are those of Rapin and Coste, who represent opposite poles in their overall interpretation of the history of human thought. A lively proponent of the originality and superiority of classical Greek thought and in particular that of Aristotle, with whom speculation reached unattainable heights, Rapin conceives of the successive phases of thought as a series of moments of

decline and revival, the latter, however, never equal to the splendour of the origins. For his part, Coste explicitly refers to Fontenelle's famous *Digression*[3] and asserts the superiority of modern philosophers, Descartes in particular, turning Rapin's system of values on its head: while Rapin had polemically maintained that in the field of physics there had been more discoveries in the period from Thales to Plato and Aristotle (a sort of "golden age" of human thought) than in the following centuries, Coste held the Cartesian method to be so superior to that of the ancients that in a short period of time it had led to a greater number of discoveries than those made by all the previous philosophers put together. . .. The problematic of the *querelle* was also used by other writers: if the anti-modernist Ménage does not diverge from Laertius' classical model, then the eclecticism of Du Hamel, Villemandy, and Pourchot represents an attempt to harmonise the ancients and the moderns via a "third way" which avoids those positions which are most extreme, too compromised, or dangerous. This does not mean however that Villemandy, for example, does not possess a clear awareness of the progress that has taken place in the historical development of philosophy. This sentiment translates into a periodization of an evolutionary kind, derived from the three great ages of man: birth, adolescence, and maturity. The questions arising from the wider cultural debate of the ancients and moderns thus come to intersect with the movement for philosophical renewal inspired by Bacon and Descartes. It is in this way that we find a first elaboration of that notion of "progress" which was to become the fundamental characteristic of the great general histories of philosophy in the eighteenth century.

Bibliographical Note

Repertories: A.A. Barbier, *Dictionnaire des ouvrages anonymes* (Paris, 1872–1879, facs. repr. Hildesheim, 1969); R. Cioranescu, *Bibliographie de la littérature française du XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1965–1966, 3 vols); P.M. Conlon, *Prélude au siècle des Lumières en France. Répertoire cronologique de 1680 à 1715* (Geneva, 1970–1971), 2 vols; J.-M. Quérard, *La France littéraire* (Paris, 1827–1839; facs. repr. Paris, 1964); Ém. and Eug. Haag, *La France protestante* (Paris, 1846–1859; facs.

[3]The *Digression* bears numerous implications for the history of philosophy; see in particular the idea of the history of philosophy as the history of human mistakes, leading to progress. Touching on the ancients' interpretations of nature, nowadays set aside (Plato's ideas, Pythagoras' numbers, Aristotle's qualities), Fontanelle declares: "nous avons obligation aux Anciens de nous avoir épuisé la plus grande partie des idées fausses qu'on se pouvoit faire; il falloit absolument payer à l'erreur et à l'ignorance le tribute qu'ils ont payé, et nous ne devons pas manquer de reconnaissance envers ceux qui nous en ont acquittez" (B. Fontenelle, *Digression sur les anciens et les modernes*, in *Oeuvres diverses*, The Hague, 1728–1729, II, p. 129; but see also the dissertation in tome I on the *Histoire des oracles*, in which the Greek schools are classified in two groups according to their belief or not in oracles; on the theoretical and methodological observations contained in the essay *De l'origine des fables* and *Sur l'histoire*, and in particular on the distinction between *philosophia fabulosa* and *non fabulosa*, cf. Cantelli, *Mito e storia*, pp. 391–400).

repr. Geneva, 1966); E. Hatin, *Bibliographie historique et critique de la presse périodique française* (Paris, 1866; facs. repr. Paris, 1965); *Dictionnaire des journaux (1600–1789)*, ed. J. Sgard (Paris, 1991), 2 vols; *Dictionnaire des journalistes (1600–1789)*, ed. J. Sgard (Oxford, 1999), 2 vols.

On the cultural background: Bouillier; H. Gillot, *La querelle des anciens et des modernes en France* (Paris, 1914; facs. repr. Geneva, 1968); Hazard (in particular Parts I–II); E. Cassirer, *Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (Boston, 1955); R. Pintard, *Le libertinage érudit dans la première moitié du XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1943; Geneva and Paris, 1983); H. Busson, *La religion des classiques (1660–1685)* (Paris, 1948); A. Adam, *Histoire de la littérature française au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1948–1956); P. Vernière, *Spinoza et la pensée française avant la Révolution* (Paris, 1954; 1982[2]); H. Mattauch, *Die literarische Kritik der frühen französischen Zeitschriften, 1665–1748* (Munich, 1968); Spink (in particular Chapters 9–14, pp. 171–299); H.-J. Martin, *Livre, pouvoirs et société en France au XVIIe siècle (1598–1701)* (Geneva, 1969); H. Gouhier, *Cartésianisme et augustinisme au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1978); Id., *L'anti-humanisme au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1987); M. Fumaroli, *L'âge de l'éloquence. Rhétorique et* res literaria *de la Renaissance au seuil de l'âge classique* (Geneva, 1980); L.W.B. Brockliss, *French Higher Education in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries. A Cultural History* (Oxford, 1987); R. Nisbet, *History of the Idea of Progress* (London, 1980); S. Zoli, *Europa libertina tra Controriforma e Illuminismo. L' "Oriente" dei libertini e le origini dell'Illuminismo* (Bologna, 1989) (in particular on La Mothe Le Vayer, P.-D. Huet, and P. Bayle); A.Ch. Kors, *Atheism in France, 1650–1729* (Princeton, 1990); *Scepticism and Irreligion in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, eds. R.H. Popkin and A. Vanderjagt (Leiden – New York – Köln, 1993); *Filosofia e religione nella letteratura clandestina. Secoli XVII e XVIII*, ed. G. Canziani (Milano, 1994); *Le Stoïcisme au XVIe et XVIIe siècles*, ed. P.-F. Moreau (Caen, 1994); B. Neveu, *Érudition et religion aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris, 1994); *Aufklärung und Skepsis. Studien zur Philosophie und Geistesgeschichte des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. L. Kreimendahl (Stuttgart, 1995); *Libertinage et philosophie au XVIIe siècle*, eds. A. McKenna and P.-F. Moreau (Saint-Étienne, 1996–2005), 9 vols (in particular vol. VII; *La resurgence des philosophies antiques*, 2003); *La philosophie clandestine à l'âge classique*, eds. A. McKenna and A. Mothu (Oxford-Paris, 1997); J. Dejean, *Ancients against Moderns. Culture War and the Making of a Fin de Siècle* (Chicago-London, 1997); *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Philosophy*, ed. D. Garber (Cambridge, 1998); F. Charles-Daubert, *Les libertins érudits en France au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1998); *Académies et sociétés savantes en Europe (1650–1800)*, eds. D.-O. Hurel and G. Laudin (Paris, 2000); Ch. Grell, *Histoire intellectuelle et culturelle de la France du grand siècle (1654–1715)* (Paris, 2000); *La querelle des anciens et des modernes, XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles*, précédée d'un essai de M. Fumaroli, "Les abeilles et les araignées", suivi d'une postface de J.-R. Armogathe, ed. A.-M. Lecocq (Paris, 2001); *Le retour des philosophes antiques à l'Âge classique,* II. *Le scepticisme au XVIe et au XVIIe siècle*, ed. P.-F. Moreau (Paris, 2001); R.H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism. From Savonarola to Bayle*, revised and expanded ed. (New York, 2003); M. Moriarty, *Early Modern French*

Thought. The Age of Suspicion (Oxford, 2003); *The Return of Scepticism. From Hobbes and Descartes to Bayle*, ed. G. Paganini (Dordrecht, 2003); *La question de l'athéisme au Dix-septième siècle*, eds. P. Lurbe and S. Taussig (Turnhout, 2004); *Il Seicento e Descartes: dibattiti cartesiani*, ed. A. Del Prete (Florence, 2004); *Un siècle de deux cents ans? Les XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles, continuités et discontinuités*, ed. J. Dagen (Paris, 2004); Ph. Chométy, *"Philosopher en langage des dieux". La poésie d'idées en France au siècle de Louis XIV* (Paris, 2006); *L'idée des bibliothèques a l'âge classique*, eds. J.-M. Chatelain and B. Teyssandier (Paris, 2008); G. Paganini, *Skepsis. Le débat des modernes sur le scepticisme. Montaigne – Le Vayer – Campanella – Hobbes – Descartes – Bayle* (Paris 2008).

On historiography: A. Momigliano, "The Controversy of the 17th and 18th Centuries on the Value of Historical Evidence", in Id., *Contributo alla storia degli studi classici* (Rome, 1955; facs. repr., 1979), pp. 79–94; K. Pomian, "Le cartésianisme, les érudits et l'histoire". *Archiwum Historii Filozofii i Myśli Spolecznej*, XII (1966), pp. 175–204; G. Lefebvre, *Essays in Modern European Historiography*, ed. with an intro. by S. W. Halperin (Chicago, 1970); "Antiquité chrétienne et antiquité payenne dans la culture française du XVIIe siècle", *Dix-septième siècle*, n. 131, 1981/2; C. Borghero, *La certezza e la storia. Cartesianismo, pirronismo e conoscenza storica* (Milan, 1983); Id., *Conoscenza e metodo della storia da Cartesio a Voltaire* (Turin, 1990); Ch. Grell, *L'histoire entre érudition et philosophie. Étude sur la connaissance historique à l'âge des Lumières* (Paris, 1993); Id., *Le Dix-huitième siècle et l'antiquité en France*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1995); B. Guion, *Du bon usage de l'histoire. Histoire, morale et politique à l'âge classique* (Paris, 2008).

On the attitude of the philosophers towards the history of philosophy: H. Gouhier, "Les philosophes du XVIIe siècle devant l'histoire de la philosophie", *Dix-septième siècle*, n. 54–55 (1962), pp. 5–12; H. Lübbe, "Philosophiegeschichte als Philosophie", in *Einsichten. Gerhard Krüger zum 60. Geburtstag* (Frankfurt a. M., 1962), pp. 204–229 (on Descartes); Gueroult, 1, pp. 171–193 (on Descartes and Malebranche), 196–206 (on Pascal); M. Spallanzani, "Philosophes, doctes et pédants: l'histoire de la philosophie dans la lettre de Descartes à l'abbé Picot", in *Materia actuosa. Antiquité, âge classique, lumières. Mélanges en l'honneur d'Olivier Bloch*, eds. M. Benitez, A. McKenna, G. Paganini and J. Salem (Paris, 2000), pp. 107–119; F.A. Meschini, "Descartes e gli antichi", in *Socrate in Occidente*, ed. E. Lojacono (Florence, 2004), pp. 283–323; A. De Maria, "Malebranche e la storia", *Annuario filosofico*, XII (1996), pp. 197–228 (on the history of philosophy, pp. 215–218); A. Stile, "Malebranche e la storia nella *Recherche de la vérité*", in *Lo storicismo e la sua storia. Temi, problemi, prospettive*, eds. G. Cacciatore, G. Cantillo, and G. Lissa (Milan, 1997), pp. 24–38; F. Azouvi, *Descartes et la France. Histoire d'une passion nationale* (Paris, 2002); S. Van Damme, *Descartes. Essai d'histoire culturelle d'une grandeur philosophique* (Paris, 2002); M. Spallanzani, "*Nihil est veritate antiquius*. Descartes e gli antichi", in *Descartes e l'eredità cartesiana nell'Europa sei-settecentesca*, eds. M.T. Marcialis and F. Crasta (Lecce, 2002), pp. 71–89; M. Sina, "Mabillon e la filosofia moderna", *Rivista di filosofia neo-scolastica*, C (2008), pp. 33–48; *Descartes et les lettres. Epistolari' e filosofia in Descartes e nei cartesiani*, ed. F. Marrone (Florence, 2008) .

On philosophical historiography: Jonsius, pp. 175–184; Brucker, I, pp. 36–37; E. Garin, "La storia "critica" della filosofia nel Settecento", in Id., *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo* (Pisa, 1970), pp. 241–284 (Florence, 1993[2]); Braun, pp. 59–63 (on the relationship between Cartesianism and historical erudition) and 141–143 (on the French authors of the period); Rak, pp. 65–128; Del Torre, pp. 18–19, 43, 53, 61–63; Ch. B. Schmitt, "The Development of the Historiography of Scepticism. From the Renaissance to Brucker", in *Scepticism from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*, eds. R.H. Popkin and Ch.B. Schmitt (Wiesbaden, 1987), pp. 185–200; L. Bianchi, "Alle fonti della ragione. Il pensiero libertino di fronte alla tradizione filosofica", in *L'interpretazione nei secoli XVI e XVII*, eds. G. Canziani and Y.-Ch. Zarka (Milan, 1993), pp. 127–153; G. Piaia, "European Identity and National Characteristics in the *Historia philosophica* of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries", *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, XXXIV (1996), pp. 593–605; D. Ribard, *Raconter, vivre, penser. Histoires de philosophes, 1650–1766* (Paris, 2003); E. Bury, "Aspects de la philologie socratique au XVIIe siècle. L'élaboration d'une figure philosophique", in *Socrate in Occidente*, pp. 10–32; J.-P.Cavaillé, "Socrate libertin", *ibi*, pp. 33–65.

On B. Lamy: A. Michel, "De Gerhard Vossius au P. Bernard Lamy. Rhétorique et cartésianisme au XVIIe siècle", in "*Ars rhetorica*" *antica e nuova* (Genoa, 1983), pp. 117–138; A. Becerra, "*Usage* et *raison* nella riflessione filosofico-linguistica di Bernard Lamy (1640–1715)", *Acme*, XLVIII (1995), 3, pp. 85–110; B. Timmermans, "De la figuration au perspectivisme. Le rôle de Lamy dans l'histoire des méthodes", in *Immaginazione e conoscenza nel Settecento italiano e francese*, ed. S. Verhulst (Milan, 2002), pp. 63–78.– On P. Nicole: "Nicole et l'histoire", *Dalhousie French Studies*, LXV (2003), pp. 58–67. – On L. Bordelon: M. Bokobza Kahan, "Intrusions d'auteur et ingérences de personnages. La métalepse dans les romans de Bordelon et de Mouhy", *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, XVI (2003/2004), pp. 639–654. – On Chauvin's *Lexicon philosophicum*: JS, LVIII (1713), I, pp. 235–237; L. Geldsetzer, *Zur philosophischen Lexicographie der Gegenwart. Zur Geschichte ihrer Theorie und über das "Lexicon philosophicum" des Stephanus Chauvin (1713)* (Düsseldorf, 1967); E. Canone, "I lessici filosofici latini del Seicento", in *Il vocabolario della* République des Lettres. *Terminologia filosofica e storia della filosofia. Problemi di metodo*, ed. M. Fattori (Florence, 1997), pp. 96–102, 104–105, 113–114. – On S. Foucher: Bouillier, II, pp. 382–385; Spink, pp. 12, 196, 213; DthC, VI/1, cols. 615–616; R.A. Watson, *The Downfall of Cartesianism, 1673–1712. A Study of Epistemological Issues in Late Seventeenth-Century Cartesianism* (The Hague, 1966); Id., *The Breakdown of Cartesian Metaphysics* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J., 1987), pp. 33–45 and 57–77; Id., "Foucher's Mistake and Malebranche's Break. Intelligible Extension and the End of Ontology", in *Nicolas Malebranche. His Philosophical Critics and Successors*, ed. S. Brown (Assen, 1991), pp. 22–34; G. Paganini, *Scepsi moderna. Interpretazioni dello scetticismo da Charron a Hume* (Cosenza, 1991), pp. 124–133 and 405–432; *Malebranche's First and Last Critics: Simon Foucher and Dortus de Mairan*, eds. R.A. Watson and M. Grene (Carbondale-Edwardsville, Il., 1995); A. Ingegno, "Note su Foucher, Malebranche e il concetto di estensione", in *La geografia dei saperi. Scritti in memoria di Dino Pastine*, eds. D. Ferraro and G. Gigliotti (Florence, 2000),

pp. 131–159; E. Scribano, "Foucher and the Dilemmas of Representation: a Modern Problem?", in *The Return of Scepticism*, pp. 197–212. – On G. Naudé: L. Bianchi, *Rinascimento e libertinismo. Studi su Gabriel Naudé* (Naples, 1996); F. Gabriel, "Naudé et la réception des Anciens", in *Libertinage et philosophie*, VII, pp. 45–83; E. Bœuf, *La bibliothèque parisienne de Gabriel Naudé en 1630: les lectures d'un libertin érudit* (Geneva, 2007). – On La Mothe Le Vayer: F.L. Wickelgren, *La Mothe Le Vayer, sa vie et son oeuvre* (Paris, 1934); *Libertinage et philosophie*, vol. II (1997); P. Capitani, "La storia tra retorica e scienza: il pirronismo di La Mothe Le Vayer", *Dianoia*, V (2000), pp. 57–93; G. Ruocco, "Images de la raison humaine dans le scepticisme de La Mothe Le Vayer", in *Révolution scientifique et libertinage*, eds. A. Mothu and A. Del Prete (Turnhout, 2000), pp. 117–145; Ph.-J. Salazar, *"La divine sceptique": éthique et rhétorique au XVIIe siècle: autour de La Mothe Le Vayer* (Tübingen, 2000); S. Giocanti, *Penser l'irrésolution. Montaigne, Pascal, La Mothe Le Vayer: trois itinéraires sceptiques* (Paris, 2001); E. Bury, "Écriture libertine et sources doxographiques. Le cas de La Mothe Le Vayer", in *Libertinage et philosophie*, vol. VI (2002), pp. 19–36; J.-P.Cavaillé, *Dis/simulations: Jules-César Vanini, François La Mothe Le Vayer, Gabriel Naudé, Louis Machon et Torquato Accetto: religion, morale et politique au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 2002); S. Gouverneur, *Prudence et subversion libertines: la critique de la raison d'État chez F. La Mothe Le Vayer, G. Naudé et S. Sorbière* (Paris, 2005); I. Moreau, "La Mothe Le Vayer, ou comment transformer un ouvrage de commande sur la grâce en défense et illustration des philosophes de l'Antiquité réputés athées", in *"Parler librement". La liberté de parole au tournant du XVIe et du XVIIe siècle*, eds. I. Moreau and G. Holtz (Paris, 2005), pp. 159–170. – On *Theophrastus redivivus*: Spink, pp. 67–71; T. Gregory, *«Theophrastus redivivus». Erudizione ed ateismo nel Seicento* (Naples, 1979); Del Torre, pp. 35–36. – On the *Opinions des anciens sur la nature de l'âme* and analogous works: Spink, pp. 126–127. – On Fontenelle: G. Cantelli, "Mito e storia in J. Leclerc, Tournemine e Fontenelle", *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia*, XXVII (1972), pp. 269–286 and 385–400; M.T. Marcialis, *Fontenelle. Un filosofo mondano* (Sassari, 1978), pp. 159–207; Gueroult, 1, pp. 285–298; *Fontenelle. Actes du colloque tenu a Rouen du 6 au 10 octobre 1987*, ed. A. Niderst (Paris, 1989).

1.1 Jean de Launoy (1603–1678)

De varia Aristotelis in Academia Parisiensi fortuna

1.1.1. Born near Valognes (Normandy) in 1603, Jean de Launoy (*Launojus*) studied philosophy and theology at Coutances, then received his doctorate in Paris in 1634 and was ordained to the priesthood. After a journey to Italy, which enabled him to visit libraries and meet a large number of scholars, he devoted himself entirely to study. In 1641 he began his critical research into hagiographical legends and monastic history, which earned him fame as an "unseater of saints and a destroyer of monastic privileges". In 1643 he was appointed member of the royal commission on censorship, created in order to prevent the spread of Jansenism, but he soon became

a suspect in his own right; in 1648 he was expelled from the *Collège de Navarre* for having declared the recitation of the breviary not compulsory but merely an act of devotion; in 1656 he refused to support the censorship of two of Arnauld's propositions and was struck off the catalogue of the doctors of the Sorbonne. The Jansenists considered him one of their own, but de Launoy was too much of an independent spirit to belong to any one party, and indeed his beliefs on the sacraments were often in contrast with Jansenism. He was however a convinced supporter of Gallican theories, opposing papal infallibility and affirming the superiority of the council. Every Monday he held conferences in his house on the doctrine of the clergy in France, which were prohibited by the court following the publication of the *Veneranda Romanae Ecclesiae circa simoniam traditio* (1675). He died in 1678.

1.1.2. De Launoy was a very prolific writer: Nicéron registers no less than 85 of his works, concerning above all theology, ecclesiastical discipline, hagiographical criticism, and historical erudition. His *Opera omnia*, edited by the abbé François Granet (a well-known collaborator on literary journals) came out in Geneva in 1731–1732 filling 5 tomes in 10 folio volumes. De Launoy's production begins with a philosophical and theological work, the *Syllabus rationum quibus causa Durandi, de modo conjunctionis concursuum Dei et creaturae defenditur et inofficiosa quorumdam recentiorum censura refellitur* (Paris, 1636), in which (in agreement with Durand of Saint Pourçain) he maintains that God does not concur immediately in the evil acts of free creatures. In the field of theology, de Launoy wrote works on the immaculate conception (not considered a dogma of faith), the assumption of the Virgin, grace, and the sacraments. He studied in particular the question of marriage, which he saw (against the explicit doctrine of the Council of Trent) as a civil contract, the competence of the civil authorities, granted the right to diriment impediments: on this subject he wrote the treatise *De regia in matrimonio potestate* (Paris, 1674), condemned by the Pope in 1688. Questions regarding the authority and infallibility of the Pope on the other hand were tackled in his voluminous correspondence, contained in tome V of his *Opera omnia*. He also took part in the discussion on the author of the *De imitatione Christi*, taking the side of Giovanni Gersen, in his *Dissertatio continens judicium de auctore librorum De imitatione Christi* (Paris, 1649).

De Launoy's erudite interests were aimed in particular at the history of culture and the great scholastic institutions of the Middle Ages, in Paris above all: he began with his *De varia Aristotelis in Academia Parisiensi fortuna, extraneis hinc inde adornata praesidiis, liber* (Lutetiae Parisiorum: typis E. Martini, 1653, 8°, 160 pp.), re-published many times (2nd ed. enlarged and corrected: Hagae Comitum: apud A. Vlacq, 1656, 4°, vi–94 pp.; 3rd ed.: Lutetiae Parisiorum: apud E. Martinum, 1662, 8°, viii–276 pp.). The work was later reprinted together with the *De historia peripatetica dissertatio* by J. Jonsius and the *De varia Aristotelis in scholis protestantium fortuna* by J. H. Elswich (Vitembergae: apud Saxones, 1720), and then in his *Opera omnia*, tome IV/1, pp. 173–245; the catalogue of the *Bibl. Nationale* in Paris also notes an edition (80 pp.) without date or place of publication. De Launoy later published the *De scholis celebrioribus, seu a Carolo Magno seu post eundem Carolum per Occidentem instauratis*, *liber* (Lutetiae Parisiorum: typis

viduae E. Martini, 1672, 8°, 536 pp.), reprinted together with the *Iter Germanicum* by J. Mabillon, ed. J. A. Fabricius (Hamburg, 1717); in *Opera omnia*, IV/1, pp. 1–172. This is a collection of documents on the great medieval schools, divided into 62 chapters, the longest of which (Ch. LIX) is devoted to the "Schola Parisiensis" (*Opera omnia*, IV/1, pp. 62–108). The work was praised by Brucker, who consulted it in the 1717 edition (Brucker, III, p. 556). Finally, the year before his death saw the publication of the voluminous *Regii Navarrae Gymnasii Parisiensis historia* (Parisiis: apud viduam E. Martini, 1677, 2 vols, 4°; in *Opera omnia*, IV/1, pp. 289–791). Divided into four parts, it sets out the "gesta" of the famous college and provides a bibliography of its doctors from 1300 up to 1640, also providing a large number of unedited documents. This work was also used as a source by Brucker.

Here we will examine the *De varia Aristotelis in Academia Parisiensi fortuna liber*, which is the most wide-ranging of the three works: despite its restrictive title in fact, it is a veritable history of the fortune of Aristotle from the Patristic age up until the 17th century, and as such comes close to the concept of the "general" history of philosophy; it should not be forgotten indeed that for several centuries the university of Paris was the centre and symbol of Western philosophical culture.

1.1.3. In the *De varia Aristotelis fortuna* de Launoy does not openly state his philosophical convictions, but we may suppose that he identified with that eclectic orientation which he attributes with a certain emphasis to the person to whom the work is dedicated, Henri-Louis Habert, lord of Montmort, "a man of wide and varied cultural interests", the friend and protector of Gassendi, whose works he was to publish in 1658. In the *Praefatio,* Montmort is presented as someone "who considers all philosophers as vendors of wisdom: he does not want anything to do with those who set out spoilt wares, and loves those who set out genuine wares". As for the latter, he has no hesitation in increasing the price and buying the most precious of them, "whoever the vendor may be, Plato, Epicurus, Zeno, or Aristotle" (*De varia Aristotelis fortuna*, in *Opera omnia*, IV/1, p. 173). De Launoy then mentions the formation of the sects, in which lordship and slavery are two complementary terms, and pauses to examine the Aristotelian sect, which has reached such a position of hegemony as to condition religious truths themselves. The theoretical discussion on the validity and excesses of Aristotelianism is immediately put to one side, however, since de Launoy quickly makes it clear that he intends to work as a historian and not to uphold a particular opinion, for or against the dominion of Aristotle.[4] This intention is repeated more than once in the course of the discussion, as in the case of the controversy between Petrus Ramus and the Aristotelians supported by king Francis I, in which de Launoy proclaims his own neutrality as a historian.[5] Thus, with regard to the contrast between the first and the last phase in the fortune of

[4] *De varia Aristotelis fortuna*, p. 173: "Aliam suscepi cogitationem, aliud amplector opus, in quo non *disputatoris*, sed *historici* tenendae sunt partes" (italics ours).

[5] *Ibi*, p. 208: "Neque de causa Rami neque de facto Francisci regis quicquam pronuntiandum. [. . .] Scribo tantum historiam, cui quae gesta sunt, simpliciter narrare incumbit".

Aristotle, de Launoy comments: "I speak as a historian (*historice loquor*) and it is not my job to resolve such great disputes. Let whoever wants to do it, and whoever suceeds will have my full approvation" (p. 231). Further on he puts us on our guard against the prevarications of Aristotelianism with respect to Christianity, but here too he is quick to end the discussion so as not to wander off his subject (p. 238). De Launoy conceives of his historiographical work therefore in terms of pure erudition, to the extent that in the concluding chapter of the work, addressing himself again to Montmort, he admits to having created an ordered collection of documents rather than a veritable history, which is a task reserved instead for the great orator, according to the Ciceronian precept (p. 245). This observation is a confirmation in the specific field of the history of philosophy of the gap between *history* and *erudition* which characterises French culture of the late seventeenth century.

1.1.4. *De varia Aristotelis in Academia Parisiensi fortuna*

1.1.4.1. The text is preceded by a preface and is divided (in the 1732 edition used here) into 20 chapters of unequal length: the longest have their own subdivisions with titles (note that in the 2nd ed. of 1656 there are only 17 chapters and there are smaller internal subdivisions). The index of chapters is placed at the beginning of the tome. Bibliographical references are inserted into the text; there are rare explanatory notes or notes containing corrections at the bottom of the page, added by the editor of the *Opera omnia*.

1.1.4.2. The history of the fortune of Aristotle in the Paris Studium is marked by eight events (*casus*), which can be made to correspond to as many periods, in a continuous crescendo which goes from the condemnation of Aristotle's works to the flames to their position of hegemony in philosophical and theological culture. The first event is the provincial council of Paris in 1209, in which the errors of Almaric of Bène were condemned as were those of Aristotle, whose works had recently been read and commentated on by the professors of the Paris stadium. The second refers to the statutes of 1215, which authorise the reading of the *Organon* but renew the ban on the *Physics* and the *Metaphysics*. The third is the decree by Gregory IX (1231), which prohibits the reading of Aristotle's works until they have been purged of errors. The fourth is the reform decree of 1366, in which the ban on reading is limited only to the *Physics*. The fifth concerns the reform of the university statutes promulgated by cardinal Guillaume d'Estouteville (1452), which prescribes among other things the reading of Aristotle's moral works. The sixth concerns the polemic between Ramus and the Aristotelians, which ends with the defeat of the former (1543). The fortune of Aristotle becomes "maxima, amplissima, et florentissima" after the new statutes of the Faculty of Arts prescribed the reading of his works (1601). Finally, the eighth and final event is constituted by the 1624 condemnation by the parlement of Paris against the two *adversarii* of Aristotle, Jean Bitaud and Étienne de Clave, and the consequent ban on the teaching of doctrines other than those of the Stagirite.

1.1.4.3. From the interpretative point of view, more than true historiographical theories, de Launoy's work presents a series of observations and corrections, in which we

can glimpse several characteristics of a cultural personality which remains for the most part hidden behind the finely-woven succession of documents and quotations which constitutes the text. In effect, despite the proclaimed neutrality of the historian, there is one fundamental theme that unifies the entire work and problematizes the documents and quotations collected in several places: this is the theme of the relationship between philosophy and theology, reason and faith, which manifests itself with particular intensity in several considerations on the defence of Aristotle made by Melchor Cano in the tenth book of his *De locis theologicis*. Here de Launoy expresses himself decidedly in favour of a clear distinction between Aristotelian philosophy and Christian theology, referring to the example of the ancient Fathers ("It is in fact safer to follow the example of our ancestors"), and he regrets that Cano has not dealt in depth with the question of the relationship between pagan philosophy and Christian religion (*De varia Aristotelis fortuna*, p. 237). On the other hand, de Launoy does not accept Luther's indiscriminate accusation against Scholasticism of having monstrously mixed up religious truths and philosophical arguments; and, inspired by several passages from two sixteenth- and seventeenth-century scholastic theologians, Albertus Pighius and the archbishop of Rouen François de Harlay de Champvallon, he rejects Luther's definition of scholastic theology (p. 231; cf. Heumann, III, p. 153).

De Launoy therefore shows an avoidance of the most controversial attitudes to Scholasticism, which at that time was at the centre of contrasting opinions, and attempts to remain on a rigorously objective plane, equidistant from confessional extremes. Francesco Patrizi's proposal to eliminate Aristotle from the schools, for example, is commented on with a significant reference to Melancthon, who in turn wished to exclude Aristotle from the schools of theology. Melancthon was however much more critical than Patrizi, because he had distanced himself from the Church of Rome (*De varia Aristotelis fortuna*, p. 218).

Other observations are of a more strictly historical nature. De Launoy wonders, for example, how it was that Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas wrote their commentaries despite the ban on the reading of Aristotle's works, and his answer is that perhaps they held themselves to be exempt from the decrees of the council of Paris and Gregory IX, or that perhaps they were unaware of them. Moreover he corrects the accusation of heresy made against Abelard by Campanella and by other writers "unaware of historical facts", pointing out that the Parisian master "conformed to the Church synods and joined the monks of Cluny, living in peace and sanctity" (pp. 190 and 194). From the point of view of its relationship with the genre of the history of philosophy, the most interesting observations concern several corrections to book III of Hornius' *Historia philosophica*, which quote several passages from St. Jerome and St. Cyril of Alexandria as evidence of the singular praise attributed to Aristotle by the Fathers. De Launoy contests this statement, demonstrating that Hornius quoted texts which he did not know directly and manipulated them, distorting their sense in such a way as to make them express a praise for Aristotle which was wholly alien to the intention of the authors (pp. 232–234).

1.1.4.4. De Launoy's is a method of compilation, using two quite distinct classes of documents: (a) official acts, that is to say the decrees of religious and political

authorities and the various statutes and regulations of the Sorbonne (or, in the case of the early fortune, the unedited chronicles of the time), and (b) the writings of the Fathers of the Church and medieval and modern writers, at times including quite lengthy quotations. The "octo Aristotelis fortunae" therefore constitutes a sort of chronological framework and a historical and institutional scheme, which is followed by a true anthology of texts interwoven with observations and corrections. At times de Launoy's observations take on a form of their own under the title of *Nonnullae in hoc iudicium animadversiones*, as in the case of Melchor Cano quoted above. The sources used are abundant: the Chapter II, for example (*Primam Aristotelis fortunam antiqui Patres Ecclesiae praejudicarunt*) includes a numbered list of 37 ancient writers, from Justinian and Clement of Alexandria up to Rhabanus Maurus, Leo IX, Arnulf of Rochester and St. Bernard. A large amount of space is devoted to contemporary authors and authors from the past few centuries, both against Aristotle (from Bessarion to Bernardino Donati; Omer Talon, a follower of Ramus, to Sébastien Basson, Gassendi, Jean Bitaud, and Étienne de Clave) and favourable to him, such as Cano, Antonio Bernardi della Mirandola and the Jesuit Girolamo Dandini (*De varia Aristotelis fortuna*, pp. 239–242; on de Launoy's *animadversiones* regarding Dandini's praise of Aristotle, cf. Heumann, III, pp. 153–154).

1.1.5. We can apply to the *De varia Aristotelis fortuna* the general judgement which Louis-Ellies Du Pin pronounced on de Launoy's entire production: "He oppresses not only his adversaries, but also his readers because of the great number and the length of the passages which he quotes in their entirety and which he continually repeats in his works; but for the rest he is abundant in his quotations and exhaustive in his argumentation, when he tackles it" (Du Pin, *Bibliothèque*, III, p. 183). Bayle praises the work for its historico-critical rigour, noting that de Launoy "has provided a thousand good opportunities for discerning the true and the false in historical subjects" (P. Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, Amsterdam 1734, III, p. 628). The *De varia Aristotelis fortuna* was reviewed at length in the "Acta philosophorum", and was also quoted by Dorn, who observed that the author added his own opinions here and there, but was at times excessive in his criticisms of Aristotle (Jonsius, p. 182). De Launoy's work placed a vast amount of ordered material at scholars' disposal and was thus used as a source by historians of philosophy; Brucker, for example, refers to it regarding the highly critical attitude of the Fathers towards Aristotle (Brucker, VI, p. 534).

The work's place in the evolution of historiographical practice was particularly stressed by Braun, for whom the objectivity of the exposition and the critical spirit which the "dénicheur de saints" applied to his analysis of documents and judgements made him the precursor of Bayle; his approach, which tends to create a retrospective outline of the "development" or the "destiny" of Aristotelian philosophy, "allows him at the same time to let the features of a new object emerge, an object situated beyond the texts and defined in a new transcendence" (Braun, p. 64). In reality however it is not easy for us to perceive this "new transcendence" in de Launoy's work, where the historical process of the fortune of Aristotle is reduced to

an ordered cataloguing of moments documented in precise official acts, which the author lists almost as if he were a notary. De Launoy did not see any significance in the "destiny" of Aristotle other than that of *inconstantia*, linked to the classical concept of *fortuna*: "If someone therefore", he notes towards the end of his work, "puts the last period of Aristotle's fortune together with the first, he will find himself quite amazed by the fickleness of human affairs" (*De varia Aristotelis fortuna*, p. 231). Indeed his reference to the *exempla maiorum* certainly does not denote an awareness of the historical process understood as profound change and distancing: despite his critical rigour, de Launoy seems somewhat removed from that perspective which, according to Braun, leads us to "free ourselves of the cult of documents and the passion for antiquity".

1.1.6. The life of the author and his works were published, under the title *Launoiana*, in *Opera omnia*, IV/2, pp. 337–502 + LXIII. Cf. also: L.E. Du Pin, *Bibliothèque des auteurs ecclésiastiques du Dix-septième siècle*, IIIe partie: *Des auteurs qui ont fleuri depuis 1650 jusqu'à 1675* (Paris, 1708), pp. 98–183; Nicéron, XXXII, pp. 84–139; BUAM, XXIII, pp. 439–445; P. Féret, *La Faculté de théologie de Paris et ses docteurs les plus célèbres* (Paris, 1900–1907), IV, pp. 1–35; DThC, IX/1, cols. 2–6; J.-M. Grès-Gayer, " 'L'Aristarque de son siècle'. Le docteur Jean de Launoy (1601–1678)", in *Papes, princes et savants dans l'Europe moderne. Mélanges à la mémoire de Bruno Neveu*, eds. J.-L. Quantin and J.-C. Waquet (Geneva, 2007), pp. 269–285.

On the fortune of the *De varia Aristotelis fortuna*: JS, LXXI (1722), I, pp. 276–278; P. Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (Amsterdam, 1734), III, p. 628; Heumann, I, pp. 690–720; III, pp. 149–154 (regarding the 1720 Wittemberg ed.); Jonsius, pp. 181–182; NAE, 1734, pp. 199 ff.; Brucker, III, p. 556; IV, pp. 534, 610, 622; Degérando, I, pp. 133–134.

On modern criticism regarding the history of philosophy: Braun, pp. 63–64; Del Torre, pp. 11n, 49n, 53; M. Reulos, "Aristote dans les collèges du XVIe siècle", in *Platon et Aristote à la Renaissance* (Paris, 1976), pp. 152–153; J.M. Headley, "Tommaso Campanella and Jean de Launoy. The Controversy over Aristotle and his reception in the West", *Renaissance Quarterly*, XLIII (1990), pp. 529–550.

1.2 Jean-Baptiste Du Hamel (1624–1706)

De consensu veteris et novae philosophiae

1.2.1. Distinguished scientist, philosopher, and theologian, Jean-Baptiste Du Hamel was born in Vire, Normandy, in 1624. He entered the Oratory in 1643, and taught philosophy and theology in the schools of the order, which he left in 1653 to become curate of Neuilly-sur-Marne and then the King's almoner and professor of Greek and Latin at the *Collège Royal*. In 1666 Colbert appointed him perpetual secretary of the new *Académie royale des sciences*, a position from which he retired in 1697 because of his advanced age, leaving Fontenelle as his successor. In 1668 he accompanied Colbert de Croissy to the congress of Aachen; he then stayed in England and Holland, again with de Croissy, who had been appointed ambassador

there. Du Hamel took advantage of these journeys to visit libraries and take part in scientific circles, linking himself above all to Boyle, and developing an interest in experimental methods. He died in Paris in 1706.

1.2.2. Du Hamel's literary production includes scientific, philosophical, theological and exegetical works, as well as the *Regiae scientiarum academiae historia* (Paris, 1698) and numerous translations, among which Giovanni della Casa's *Galateo* and Baldassare Castiglione's *Cortegiano*.

Among his scientific works, worthy of note are the *Astronomia physica seu de luce, natura et motibus corporum caelestium libri duo* (Paris, 1660); the *De meteoris et fossilibus libri duo* (Paris, 1660); the *De corporum affectionibus cum manifestis tum occultis libri duo, seu promotae per experimenta philosophiae specimen* (Paris, 1670); and the *De corpore animato libri quatuor* (Paris, 1673). His philosophical interests are expressed in the *De consensus veteris et novae philosophiae, ubi Platonis, Aristotelis, Epicuri, Cartesii aliorumque placita de principiis rerum excutiuntur* (Parisiis: apud C. Savreux, 1663), 4°, xxviii–280 pp. (Rouen, 1667 and 1675; this work also figures in the collection *Opera philosophica et astronomica*, Nürnberg, 1681, 4°, I, pp. 539–799); the *De mente humana libri quatuor* (Paris, 1672); and *Philosophia vetus et nova ad usum scholae accomodata, in Regia Burgundia olim pertractata* (Paris, 1678, 1681, 1684, 1700, 1705; Nürnberg, 1684; Venice, 1730). This is a course of philosophy for the students of the *Collège de Bourgogne*, written at the invitation of Jacques-Nicolas Colbert; its success was such that the Jesuits translated it into the Tartar language to acquaint the emperor of China with Western philosophical doctrines. The work does not have an introduction on the history of philosophy, as was to become the norm in systematic handbooks; nevertheless in the *Disputatio prooemialis de philosophia in universum*, which follows the *Institutiones logicae*, Du Hamel divides the ancient schools into three: the dogmatics, sceptics, and acataleptics. In discussing the "causes" of philosophy he points out that its "causa effectrix praecipua" was God, who infused philosophy into Adam in the act of creation; this disappeared because of the "temporum injuria, et hominum negligentia", was then "restored" little by little by a number of great minds, and was then perfected by others. Du Hamel also takes up the idea of the transfer of philosophy from the Hebrews to the Egyptians and from them on to the Greeks (*Philosophia vetus et nova*, 1681, I, pp. 70–71, 77, 80–81).

Du Hamel wrote his theological and exegetical works in the last period of his life: they include a course in theology which enjoyed a wide circulatation (*Theologia speculatrix et practica juxta SS. Patrum dogmata pertractata et ad usum scholae accomodata* (Paris, 1690–1691), and was subsequently condensed into an *abrégé* entitled *Theologiae clericorum seminariis accomodatae summarium*, Paris, 1694); an edition of the Bible "cum selectis annotationibus" (Paris, 1706); and some works of Biblical exegesis.

Here we will examine the first two books of the *De consensu veteris et novae philosophiae*, which contain "philosophia naturalis generalis" and present a sort of history of philosophy by *placita* (book I: *De principiis rerum naturalium juxta Platonicos*; book II: *De principiis rerum juxta Peripateticos, Epicureos et Cartesianos*); the other two books (*De elementis; De principiis Chymicorum*) on

the other hand are devoted to "philosophia naturalis specialis" and are of a strictly scientific nature.

1.2.3. Du Hamel is a typical representative of that eclectic-syncretistic tendency which characterised numerous thinkers of the second half of the seventeenth century, who endeavoured to overcome the contrast between the ancient philosophers – Aristotle in particular – and the moderns, attempting to find a fundamental harmony on several essential points and to insert into the traditional scholastic method a number of the philosophical and scientific achievements of the *recentiores*. This speculative tendency inspired Du Hamel's most famous work, the *Philosophia vetus et nova ad usum scholae accommodata*, which can be credited among other things as having introduced the doctrines of Descartes and the atomists into the University of Paris, traditionally hostile to any form of innovation. Syncretism however had been fully formulated in his earlier works too, giving rise to a form of treatment in which doctrinal discussion was accompanied by a historical review of the principal manifestations of human thought. His *Astronomia physica* and *De meteoris*, for example, include a collection of theories held by the ancient and modern philosophers concerning light, colours, plants, and so on. These two works are structured in the form of dialogues: the characters are Theophilus, a lively supporter of the ancients; Menander, an ardent Cartesian; and Simplicius, the spokesman of the author, who takes up a neutral position between the two contenders and attempts to make them agree, taking up what is best in their theories. The *De consensu veteris et novae philosophiae*, whose title is itself programmatic, can be placed in this context. In the opening pages Du Hamel sets out a sort of manifesto of eclecticism, in which he points out among other things the need to know the exact outline of the "form" of every philosophical school. He does not allude explicitly to the history of philosophy, but it is clear that, since it provides a means for arriving at a serene understanding of the various philosophies, historiography comes to have a precise value, even if it is entirely finalised towards the theoretical activity of "reconciling" the different doctrines: "This indeed is my intention, to examine the theories of almost all the philosophers, and take as though our own that which is most probable; to bring the extreme positions to a just tempering; and to reconcile, finally, as far as is possible, those positions which are not as contrasting as they seem to be at first sight. Above all the treatment of natural philosophy will be more complete if the form of each sect is shown in all its outlines and not vaguely hinted at or, as usually happens, deformed by the desire to contradict (*contradicendi libidine*): it will be clear to anyone who is not stupid that Plato, Aristotle, and the other major philosophers did not see everything or nothing. They all tend to the same goal, though following different paths" (*De consensu*, in *Operum philosophicorum tomus primus*, Nürnberg, 1681, pp. 540–541).

Du Hamel shows that he is aware of the difficulties faced by his programme of harmonisation, but he vigorously maintains that only by attenuating the disputes between philosophers will it be possible to improve the fate of philosophy itself: "I do not know what the outcome of this operation will be, nor how it will be judged by scholars. No one infact incurs more offence or comes up against more enmity than he who attempts to resolve others' quarrels or to calm excited souls. [. . .] We

must hope indeed that the philosophers set some limit to their controversies: nothing deters the well-educated from this science as much as the clashes between screaming philosophers" (pp. 543–544).

1.2.4. *De consensu veteris et novae philosophiae*

1.2.4.1. The work opens with a preface (*Ratio huius operis*, pp. 540–546 in the 1681 Nuremberg edition). Books I–II (pp. 547–605; 606–695) are each divided into five chapters, in turn subdivided into titled paragraphs. The bibliographical references are marked in the margin. There are two indices at the end of the work: the *index capitum,* and the *index rerum praecipuarum* which for the most part is devoted to terms presented in books III and IV.

1.2.4.2. Du Hamel does not mention a framework of periodization in his discussion, apart from the obvious distinction between *philosophia vetus* and *philosophia nova*. In the place of periodization he adopts the criterion of a systematic division of the philosophers, both ancient and modern, on the basis of their opinions "de principiis rerum naturalium". This criterion is deduced from the three cognitive faculties of man: reason ("the *mens*, which grasps divine things or those that are quite remote from the senses"), imagination (*phantasia*), and the senses (*sensus exteriores*). These faculties correspond to four categories of philosophers. The first includes Pythagoras, Plato, and most of the ancient thinkers, who, "under the guidance of reason established the first principles (*primordia*) of things, which cannot be grasped either by sense or imagination", namely the *principia externa et metaphysica*. In the second category are Aristotle and his followers, those who, "guided by an intermediary way of philosophizing, posited as the principles and foundations of things matter and form, which are not perceived by the senses nor result from the imaginative capacity, but through the reason are obtained from the things that fall under the senses". From these – continues the author, hinting at the third category – we can distinguish the philosophers who identified the "simplest principles of bodies", which are grasped through the imagination and not the sense, such as the atoms and vacuum of Democrites and Epicurus or the "corpuscles in movement" of Descartes and others. The fourth and final category includes the sensists, from Thales up to the modern *Chymici*, who in the author's opinion are not to be disregarded (*minime contemnendi*) and who are dealt with in books III and IV (*De consensu*, pp. 547–548).

Leaving aside the last category, which concerns *physica specialis* or experimental science, the philosophers who are given the most space are the "Platonici", who take up the entire first book (Ch. I: *De principiis in universum juxta Platonicos*; II: *De existentia Dei*; III: *De ideis, numeris et pulchritudine*; IV: *De mundo animali, et seminario*; V: *De mundo sensibili, ubi fuse de mundi origine*). The reasons, both speculative and apologetic, which underlie this choice are set out by the author himself in the preface.[6] These words are to be understood however as an

[6] *De consensu*, pp. 541–542: "Huius philosophiae explicationi diutius immorati sumus, quod res maximas et cognitione dignissimas complectatur. Habet id quoque prae ceteris, quod ad aeternas

adherence not so much to historical Platonism as to a number of themes which the Platonists were to develop in particular (such as the existence of God) and which are the object of a lengthy theoretical discussion, which also refers to Descartes' positions.

1.2.4.3. Given the fundamentally speculative nature of the work, within which the "old" and the "new" philosophies are approached, it is difficult to identify in the *De consensu* a true historiographical theory. An interesting aspect in this regard is the examination of the differences between the Platonists and the Peripatetics and between their respective founders, which takes up a well-known Renaissance controversy and which lends itself to a significant comparison with the *Comparaison de Platon et d'Aristote* which Rapin was to write a few years later (see below, 3.5.). Du Hamel points out first of all the fundamental difference of a speculative nature, then moving on to the differences in mental attitude and method: "The Platonists can be differentiated not only from the Peripatetics, but also from the remaining mass of philosophers, as they aim the force of their minds at the first and external causes of things [. . .]. Plato is the most sublime for the loftiness of his words and the majesty of the themes he treats; Aristotle is undoubtedly more subtle and more diligent in his investigation of the things of nature, he does not draw out his sentences with words, but, refined by a precise and sober language, shows his care over words and solicitude for things. Their method of teaching is also different: Plato proceeds from divine and heavenly things to human ones, Aristotle moves almost step by step in ascending degrees (*sursum versus redit*: the expression is Cicero's) and finally arrives at knowledge of the first mover [. . .]" (*De consensu*, p. 548; this comparison is taken up again on p. 606, in § *Quis sit philosophiae Peripateticae character*).

Du Hamel places the theory of ideas at the centre of Plato's teaching, specifying that these are not "simulacra floating among the clouds, placed outside God, as most philosophers would have us believe, but rather the primeval reasons of things, not generated and always existing, which are understood by the reason"; as for the origin of this "sublime and almost divine science", he maintains that Socrates took it from the Pythagoreans, "who established the one and the numbers as the first principles of things: nor, in effect, did they understand numbers as something other than the ideas" (pp. 571 and 574). Du Hamel mixes up the doctrines of Plato (whose *Timaeus* and *Phaedo* he quotes) with those of the Neoplatonists, whose doctrine of the emanative process from God of sensible things he explains. There is one case however in which he makes a clear distinction between Plato and the "platonici": examining

---

et primitivas rationes mentem erigat, eamque a fluxis et perituris rebus avocatam, ad eas, quae sola intelligentia percipiuntur, convertat. Qua quidem in re infinitum prope monumentum est: nam obruimur turba philosophorum, qui nimis fidunt sensibus, et nihil praeter corpora intelligi posse contendunt. Atque ut mihi videtur, nulla perniciosior pestis in vitam humanam potest invadere, nihil quod magis religioni adversetur". In quoting this passage, Brucker hypothesizes that the author is alluding here to "some Gassendians or followers of Hobbes, who made such a noise in that period" (Brucker, IV, p. 762)

the notion of *fatum*, he rejects deterministic conceptions of a mechanicistic or pantheistic nature, and contrasts them with the theories of Plato and Aristotle.[7]

At the beginning of the discussion of Peripateticism (which takes up two of the five chapters of Book II), Du Hamel hints at the criticisms which Aristotle aimed at previous philosophers and defends the latter: "I am afraid that Aristotle – who held himself in no contempt, and was not well-disposed towards others – was not entirely honest in relating the reflections of great men. In fact Parmenides, whom he criticises, is highly praised by Plato, nor was he so absurd in maintaining a single and immobile principle, given that he himself, according to the testimony of Aristotle, posited principles contrary to each other, namely hot and cold. . .[there follows a brief apology of the theories of Anaximander, Anaxagoras, Thales, and other *veteres philosophi*]" (pp. 606–607).

The doctrines of Epicurus are set out and discussed in Chapter III of Book II. "The philosophy of Epicurus is positive in one sense – and this is the author's general judgement – that it is not difficult to understand nor is obscured by a multitude of words: its elements, although less true, are nevertheless connected to each other and coherent, and they do not contrast either with the senses or with nature itself, which proceeds from small beginnings to great heights" (p. 642). As for Cartesian philosophy (to which Chapter IV is devoted), Du Hamel stresses how, like a great river, it has extended from only a few principles to include all the sciences. He expresses some praise for this philosophy, without however accepting it *in toto*: "I do not know whether the principles of Cartesianism are true of false: they are certainly connected with things themselves to such an extent and explain the forces of all bodies, both occult and manifest, so well that even the most learned would not judge the first elements of nature to be different from these principles [. . .] What I like very much about Descartes is the fact that he does not confute the opinions of others with the annoying subtlety of the disputes, but declares what he thinks without resentment; moreover from established principles he deduces theories that at first sight would appear to be invented: but if we examine the plot of the whole work with a keener spirit we will judge these theories to be probable for the most part" (pp. 656–657). Faithful to his intentions, Du Hamel moves with a freedom of judgement, and in the following pages makes a comparison between Cartesianism and Scholasticism, pointing out a common mistake of theirs in tackling the problem of principles.[8]

---

[7] *De consensu*, p. 587: "Qui vero omnium connexionem seriemque causarum, qua fit omne, quod fit, fatum appellare voluerit, sententiam, inquit Augustinus, teneat, linguam corrigat. Non utique illam Democriti ineluctabilem ex necessitate materiae aut atomorum motibus contextam seriem causarum, quae nihil relinquit in libertatis arbitrio; non mundi animam cum Platonicis, non vim motricem materiae cum Chrysippo, aut Parcarum fila, aut siderum aspectus fati nomine signamus: sed aut naturae legem cum Platone, aut causarum naturalium, quae tamen impediri possunt, contextum cum Aristotile intelligimus".

[8] *Ibi*, p. 666: "Atque hoc idem mihi Cartesius, quod vulgares philosophi, videtur peccare: ille enim, geometriae assuetus, mathematicam, hi vero metaphysicam ad naturae explicationem transferunt; ille ad mechanicas et geometricas leges rerum omnium naturas et motus revocat: ut Peripatetici

1.2.4.4. In its external structure the *De consensu* resembles the ancient genre of the *placita philosophorum*, and indeed the term *placita* figures in the title. In reality, as we have already had occasion to note, the work is not limited to recounting the doctrines of the *veteres* and *novi* philosophers, but develops a theoretical discourse which pushes the historiographical aspect into the background. The use of sources itself often serves not so much to document the discussion as to support the author's own opinion.

1.2.5. In an age in which the cultural scene was dominated by the controversy over the *nouvelle philosophie*, Du Hamel's work imposed itself on scholars' attention for its attempt at harmonisation. Fontenelle sketched a clear picture of this, not devoid of irony: "That which is promised in the title is fully carried out, and the spirit of reconciliation, congenital to the author, triumphs in this work. He begins with the sublime and barely intelligible metaphysics of the Platonists on Ideas, Numbers, and archetypal Forms, and although Du Hamel recognises their obscurity he cannot deny them a place in this sort of Estates General of philosophy. He treats with the same indulgence privation, the eduction of substantial forms, and some other scholastic ideas, but when he finally arrives at principles which can be understood, that is to say the laws of movement or the less simple principles established by the chemists, we feel that despite his desire to make everything agree he naturally leaves the balance weighing on this side . . ." (Fontenelle, *Eloges des Académiciens*, pp. 129–130). The work's value as a source of information on the history of philosophy is noted however by Nicéron: "In this book there are some extracts with which we can quickly acquire a knowledge of that which the philosophers have spread over many volumes" (Nicéron, I, p. 269).

The most significant judgement was expressed by Brucker, who examined Du Hamel's thought in his *Historia critica* in the chapter *De syncretistis philosophis*, together with Leibniz. Brucker lingers in particular over the *De consensu*, quoting, besides several passages from the work, the positive judgement made in his time by Morhof: "Du Hamel's work was well received among the learned, who, although not disapproving of the doctrines of the moderns, judged it as unworthy that all those of the ancients were rejected; among those learned is Morhof (*Polyhist.*, II, II, i, 18), who, dealing with the reconciliation of the ancients and moderns, advised us to read this author above all [Du Hamel, that is] 'because he develops the argument with great care, picks out many things from the best writers, and embellishes the subject with the fair flower of eloquence'. We do not deny", recognises Brucker in turn, "that Du Hamel has written in an elegant and perspicuous style, fought many verbal battles, and has admirably illustrated the doctrines of the ancients with the observations of the moderns (*recentiorum*)". Immediately after, however, he distances himself from syncretism (which had been criticised and clearly distinguished from eclecticism in the previous pages) and stresses the excesses and the distortions

---

ad suas notiones et conceptus quosdam generales, quos ut libitum est, aut dividere solent, aut confundere, omnium corporum referunt essentias".

Du Hamel resorts to in his desire to reconcile the ancients and the moderns at all cost, as in the case of the principles of Aristotle and those of the modern *chymici*.[9]

Brucker does not mention the *De consensu* among the modern histories of philosophy: in effect, even considering it within the tradition of the *placita philosophorum*, the historiographical aim of this work appears to be secondary, as we have already pointed out. Nevertheless, if we take into account the fact that in the period in which the *De consensu* came out the genre of *historia philosophica* was still lacking from the French cultural area, then Du Hamel's work is worth taking into consideration: in the first place it is linked to the debate on the ancients and the moderns which was to condition the most significant works of philosophical historiography in late seventeenth-century France; in the second, we must bear in mind that we come across an orientation analogous to Du Hamel's syncretism a few years later in Villemandy's *Philosophiae veteris et novae parallelismus*, which also outlines a brief but complete history of philosophy. We must ask ourselves, in this regard, whether the method of comparison and "parallelism" between the *antiqui* and the *recentiores*, with a reconciliatory aim, did not contribute to create a "suture" between ancient and modern philosophy, and hence prolong the framework of periodisation to include the most recent philosophers, as is clear in Villemandy. A final reason which has led us to include the *De consensu* among the histories of philosophy is the explicit mention of the work (together with Sturmius' *Physicae conciliatricis tentamina* and Leibniz' *De Aristotile recentioribus reconciliabili*) in the preface of Deslandes' *Histoire critique*. These three writers are quoted as distinguished examples of "conciliatory" historians of philosophy, that is to say, followers of an approach that Deslandes considered to be totally unacceptable because of the radical difference between ancient and modern philosophers (see Chapter 3, para 3.1.3). From this point of view, the *De consensu* comes to be placed, from a thematic and not only a chronological point of view, at the start of a parabola which, beginning with an agreement between the ancients and moderns, was to close with a full acceptance of the separation between the great periods of the history of philosophy.

1.2.6. On Du Hamel's life, works, and thought: B. Fontenelle, "Éloges des Académiciens", in *Oeuvres* (Paris, 1767), V, pp. 125–144 (on the *De consensu*, pp. 129–130); Nicéron, I, pp. 265–274; BUAM, XII, pp. 183–185; DThC, IV, col. 2013; XII, col. 2980; XV, col. 1805; DBF, XII, cols. 15–16; Bouillier, I, pp. 556–557; A. Vialard, *Le premier secrétaire de l'Académie des Sciences. J.-B. du Hamel prêtre de l'Oratoire, chancelier de l'église de Bayeux* (Paris, 1884: on the *De consensu*, pp. 128–153); É. Bréhier, *The History of Philosophy. The Hellenic Age*, transl. J. Thomas (Chicago and London, 1963), p. 16; Spink, pp. 109, 110,

[9]Brucker, IV, p. 762: "Ast fatendum quoque est, nimium pacis et concordiae inter veteres et recentiores studium virum optimum haud raro in praeceps egisse, ut mentem veterum philosophorum everteret, et saniores haud raro sensus illis tribueret, quam systematum patitur connexio, multum lucis ex recentiore philosophia veteri violenter inferret, ubi nihil nisi tenebrae fuerunt, et sic oculatiores eos faceret, quam revera fuerunt: multa quoque supponeret, quibus simplici negatione eversis tota conciliatio subruitur. Quos naevos non potest non habere syncretismus philosophicus".

119, 191; R. Klesczewski, *Die französischen Übersetzung des "Cortegiano" von Baldassare Castiglione* (Heidelberg, 1966); Gueroult, 1, p. 277; E. Rapetti, *Percorsi anticartesiani nelle lettere a Pierre-Daniel Huet* (Florence, 2003), pp. 143–196.

On his fortune: *Giornale de' letterati* (Roma, F. Nazari), II (1670–1671), p. 15; PhT, XI (1676), pp. 570–572; MT, 1706, II, p. 61; JS, XXXV (1707), p. 397; *Nova literaria Hamburgensia*, 1707, p. 300; AE, 1708, pp. 348 ff.; Brucker, IV, pp. 259, 760–762; Degérando, I, p. 134.

The De consensu is included in Braun's chronological index, p. 372.

1.3 René Rapin (1621–1687)

Les Réflexions sur la philosophie ancienne et moderne
La Comparaison de Platon et d'Aristote

1.3.1. Born in Tours in 1621, René Rapin entered the Jesuit order at the age of 18; professor of *humanités*, he was among other things the prefect of studies of the young Alfonso Mancini, Mazarin's nephew, who died prematurely in 1658. He later devoted himself entirely to writing, cultivating both literary and religious interests, which led the abbé Pierre de La Chambre to say that Rapin served God and the world "by semester". In regular attendance at the *Académie Lamoignon* (which was held every Monday, from 1667, in the house of Guillaume de Lamoignon, the first president of the Paris parlement), Rapin took part in the theological and literary polemics of his time with a spirit of controversy, harshly critical of the Jansenists and firmly on the side of the *anciens*. He was famous above all for his Latin bucolic poetry, which earned him the title the "second Theocritus". His works enjoyed great success up until the middle of the following century, contributing to prolong the cultural supremacy of the France of the *grand siècle*: in P. Hazard's highly effective image, Rapin belonged to that group of writers "of lesser calibre" (with respect to the classics of the seventeenth century), but which, "in their day, spread abroad and percolated everywhere" (Hazard, p. 59). He died in Paris in 1687.

1.3.2. Rapin's literary production is vast (Sommervogel lists 48 works of certain attribution). Among his literary and historical works we must note the *Eclogae sacrae* (Paris, 1659), the poem *Hortorum libri IV* (Paris, 1665), the *Réflexions sur la Poëtique d'Aristote et sur les ouvrages des poëtes anciens et modernes* (Paris, 1674; facs. repr. Hildesheim, 1973; ed. E.T. Dubois, Geneva, 1970), the *Instructions pour l'histoire* (Paris, 1677), the *Histoire du Jansénisme*, and his *Mémoires* (which came out posthumously in Paris in 1861 and 1865). Appertaining to the religious field is the *De nova doctrina dissertatio, seu Evangelium Jansenistarum* (Paris, 1656), the *Esprit du Christianisme* (Paris, 1672; 1690^4), *La perfection du Christianisme tirée de la morale de Jésus-Christ* (Paris, 1673), *La foi des derniers siècles* (Paris, 1679; 1690^3), and *Les artifices des hérétiques* (Paris, 1681).

Two works are of interest from the point of view of the history of philosophy: the first (in chronological order) is *La Comparaison de Platon et d'Aristote, avec les sentiments des Pères sur leur doctrine, et quelques réflexions chrestiennes* (Paris: chez C. Barbin et F. Muguet, 1671), 12°, 270 pp.,

immediately translated into English by John Dancer (*Comparison of Plato and Aristotle* …, London, 1673; electronic edition: Ann Arbor (Mi), 2003 – EEBO. In the years that followed it was reprinted together with another three *comparaisons* (between Demosthenes and Cicero, Homer and Virgil, and Thucydides and Livy) under the general title *Les Comparaisons des grands hommes de l'antiquité, qui ont le plus excellé dans les belles lettres* (Paris: chez F. Muguet, 1684), 4°, xxviii-76–305 pp. (German trans.: *Vergleichungen der grossen Männer des Alterthums* […], Wien, 1768). The other work is entitled *Les Réflexions sur la philosophie ancienne et moderne, et sur l'usage qu'on en doit faire pour la religion* (Paris: chez F. Muguet et C. Barbin, 1676), 12°, 263 pp.; English trans.: *Reflections on Philosophy* […] (London, 1678); Latin trans. by p. Michele Bonbardi S.J.: *Animadversiones historico-criticae in philosophiam rationalem et moralem* […] (Vienna, 1719); *Animadversiones historico-criticae in philosophiam naturalem, transnaturalem et sanum usum philosophiae* (Vienna, 1718); there is also a German translation, *Betrachtungen über die Philosophie*, by Johann Georg Hamann, 1753–1756, which was only printed however in the nineteenth century, in a collection of Hamann's works: C. H. Gildemeister*, Johann Georg Hamannn's, des Magus in Norden, Leben und Schriften*, V (Gotha, 1868), pp. 45–129. Like the *Comparaison de Platon et d'Aristote*, the *Réflexions sur la philosophie* was also republished in a larger collection, entitled *Les Réflexions sur l'éloquence, la poétique, l'histoire et la philosophie. Avec le jugement qu'on doit faire des auteurs que se sont signalez dans ces quatre parties des belles lettres* (Paris: F. Muguet, 1684), 4°, 388 pp.. This collection complements the *Comparaisons des grands hommes de l'antiquité* and indeed the two works were republished under the title *Oeuvres diverses concernant les belles lettres* […], *Tome premier*: *Les Comparaisons* […] *Tome second*: *Les Réflexions* […] (Amsterdam: chez Abraham Wolfgang, 1686), 12° (1693[2]); successive editions: Amsterdam, 1709; The Hague, 1702, 1725; Paris, 1725; English trans.: *The Critical Works of Mons. Rapin* […] (London, 1706; 1731).

In the 1693 edition used here, the text of the *Comparaisons* is preceded by a general preface with its own page numbers ("Le dessein de cet ouvrage en général et en particulier"), in which the complementary nature of the two collections clearly emerges, as does their place within the "querelle des anciens et des modernes": Rapin considers the regular reading of the ancients to be a necessary condition for the development of good taste and correct discernment; for every literary discipline in the *Comparaisons* he proposes "models" based on "authority", to which there corresponds in the *Réflexions* a series of "rules" and "maxims" based on "reason".[10]

[10] *Les Comparaisons des grands hommes de l'antiquité*, 1693 ed., Fol. *2rv: «Mais comme on doit convenir, qu'on ne peut rien sçavoir en perfection dans les belles lettres, que par le commerce des Anciens: et que quelque genie qu'on ait, quand on se pique de science, on ne peut y réussir sans un goût particulier pour la plus pure et la plus saine antiquité: j'ai cru qu'il falloit commencer par bien établir ce goût. […] Car personne ne doute que les ouvrages des anciens ne soient les sources les plus pures, d'où l'on peut tirer ces richesses et ces tresors, d'où se forme le bon sens, et d'où naist ce discernement admirable, par lequel on distingue le vray d'avec le faux dans les beautez de la

It is in this context that we must place both the *Réflexions sur la philosophie* (which, unlike the other *Réflexions*, are written in a historical and not a theoretical perspective) and the *Comparaison de Platon et d'Aristote*, which is enlarged to include the history of Platonism and Aristotelianism to become a true general history of philosophy. Regarding this latter work, it is to be noted that the criterion governing the choice of "models" is different from that which inspires the other *Comparaisons*, since it refers back to Plutarch's scheme of *Parallel Lives*: Rapin declares that since the Romans did not excel in philosophy, he has compared two Greeks, abandoning the "general design, which was to compare the Greeks with the Romans, to demonstrate that the Romans prevailed over the Greeks in letters as well as in arms" (*Les Comparaisons*, p. 278).

1.3.3. Rapin's adherence to the "ancients" is motivated not only by the requirements of literary taste, but also, in the specific case of philosophy, by precise considerations of a religious nature, in which the defence of the classical philosophers (and in particular Aristotle) is strictly linked to the defence of the Christian religion, and the polemic against modern philosophers ends up by coinciding with the struggle against atheists and libertines. This apologetic attitude is already clear in the dedicatory *Epistre* to the *Réflexions sur la philosophie* addressed to Guillaume of Lamoignon (to whose first-born son, Chrétien-François, Rapin had taught rhetoric). After having noted that the idea of writing the work came to him during the "conferences of the learned men" which were held every week in Lamoignon's house, Rapin declares that his "principal intention is to show the use that must be made of philosophy for religion [. . .]. And since", he continues a little further on, directly addressing Lamoignon in his guise as magistrate, "in this century there rules a spirit of curiosity and a love for new ideas, it is your duty, milord, to prevent, with all the power of the law you are invested in, there being any innovation in a science whose results are of such great consequence for religion" (*Les Réflexions*, pp. 309–310; see also p. 368, where this theme is taken up in more detail). With this appeal Rapin is referring to the controversies which arose over the spread of the new philosophies, Cartesianism in particular, and the repressive intervention of the authorities: a few years earlier, in 1671, the archbishop of Paris had given the University a verbal order from the king which prohibited the teaching of doctrines other than those set out in the university regulations and statutes. On this occasion it was fear of ridicule (because of a burlesque *arrêt* written by Boileau: see below, 1.8.1) that had held president Lamoignon back from making the Paris parlement issue an *arrêt* (that is to say a decree) officially confirming the prohibition.

For Rapin the relationship between philosophy and religion can be condensed into these two maxims: we must "learn to be Christians before philosophers, and to be philosophers for no other reason than to become even greater Christians" (*Les Comparaisons*, fol. *7+Iv). In order to be true Christians it is necessary to submit reason to faith: it is in this that man's "reasonableness" consists. Therefore "the

---

nature, auxquelles il faut s'attacher pour bien sentir celles de l'art. Ce qui doit obliger les sçavans à s'interesser en cet ouvrage: où je leur propose des modeles de toutes les sciences à imiter dans le tome des *Comparaisons*, et des regles à suivre dans le tome des *Réflexions*».

philosophy which does not help man to be reasonable is a false philosophy; and the reason which does not render the spirit docile and submissive is a false reason [. . .]. But man's bad luck is to use reason to combat his own duty and to support his own doubts, because his doubts serve him to authorise his desires and to feed his passions. It is because of this unruliness of the heart that the unruliness of the mind begins. [. . .] The only remedy for such disorder is philosophy properly understood, which deals with righting the reason. And this must be its use. And its aim is precisely this, to inspire the true religion in man. [. . .] All other wisdom is false. [. . .] Therefore these modern philosophers – who go sowing the seeds of doubt in the mind, either on the immortality of the soul, thanks to the destruction of substantial forms, or by spreading ideas other than those assimilated in early education, when this is carried out according to the principles of faith, or finally by constructing new systems of morality and religion – are pernicious in a State when we desire virtue and reason to reign there. Let us adhere therefore to that which has already been established by faith and not cultivate philosophy unless it is to give greater authority to religion" (*Les Comparaisons*, pp. 429–432). The most "reasonable" philosophy is that of Aristotle, which is able to supply religion with the terminology to render it more comprehensible and a method for reasoning (*Les Réflexions*, pp. 448–452). Adapting Aristotle to Christianity constitutes a definitive conquest for the human mind, which is contrasted with the "insolent" attitude of modern libertines.[11]

Rapin observes that the true philosopher is he who is capable of "doubting well", that is to say, of avoiding the opposite extremes of "doubting everything and doubting nothing", and he criticises the orientation of modern philosophy in the field of logic, ethics, and above all physics. He maintains that true philosophy cannot be reduced to a chemical experiment or a geometric operation, but requires a metaphysical foundation, according to the teaching of the ancients; only a perfect knowledge of antiquity, and in particular of Plato and Aristotle, can give rise to a true philosophy which does not damage good customs and endanger religion (*Les Réflexions*, pp. 361–364; *Les Comparaisons*, pp. 275–278). It is in this perspective that we must place Rapin's discussions of the history of philosophy: "The principal design of this work", he stresses in the *Préface* to the *Réflexions sur la philosophie*, "is to provide *honnestes gens* with a true idea of a science which is the rule of the other sciences; to explain to what use it was put in the first and the last centuries, by means of a sort of history of the progress, the decline, and all the adventures which this science has been through in more than two thousand years, in such a way as to show in this *abrégé* – in which I have tried to include such a great number of things – what is strong and what is weak, what is solid and what is frivolous, what is true and what is false in philosophy" (*Les Réflexions*, p. 312). Concepts analogous to these are set out, in a more developed fashion, in the general preface to the *Comparaisons*,

[11] *Les Comparaisons*, p. 421: "Il a falu una longue suite de siecles pour rectifier par bien des épreuves l'usage de la philosophie d'Aristote, et pour la faire servir indirectement à nostre foy; et un libertin qui ne fait que de naistre, et qui n'a jamais rien vu, aura l'insolence de soumettre à son petit sens ce qu'il y a de plus relevé et de plus incomprehensible dans notre religion".

which presents the structure and the aim of the *Réflexions sur la philosophie* (*Les Comparaisons*, fol. *7+Iv-IIv).

1.3.4. *Les Réflexions sur la philosophie ancienne et moderne*

1.3.4.1. In the 1693 edition, this work takes up pages 307–460 and is introduced by a dedication to Lamoignon (pp. 309–311) and a preface (pp. 312–315). The work is divided into three parts, each subdivided into chapters or *Réflexions*; the first two are of a mainly historical nature, while the third is theoretical. The first part (*Réflexions sur la philosophie en général*, pp. 316–369) consists of an *abrégé* of the history of philosophy (reflections I–XVIII, pp. 316–346) and a series of theoretical considerations on the true attitude of the philosopher, the characteristics of true philosophy, the use of the *disputatio*, and the reform of philosophy as taught in the University (reflections XXII–XXX, pp. 351–369). These two groups of "reflections" are joined together by a comparison between ancient and modern philosophy (reflections XIX–XXI, pp. 346–351), which acts as a bridge between the historical discussion and the theoretical observations.

The second part (*De la philosophie en particulier*) covers pp. 370–441, and is in turn divided into four sections: *Réflexions sur la logique* (8 reflections, pp. 370–384), *sur la morale* (10 reflections, pp. 385–404), *sur la physique* (13 reflections, pp. 405–432), and *sur la métaphysique* (4 reflections, pp. 433–441). The third part is entitled *Réflexions sur l'usage qu'on doit faire de la philosophie pour la religion* and comprises 10 reflections (pp. 442–460). The text is furnished with numerous marginal notes quoting the sources, and is followed by an index or *Table des matières contenues dans les Réflexions sur la philosophie*.

1.3.4.2. The more general scheme of periodization revolves round the contrast between ancient and modern philosophy. Ancient philosophy is divided into seven principal "sects": the first is the Pythagorean; the second includes Socrates, Plato, the ancient and new Academics, the Pyrrhonians, and the Sceptics; the third Aristotle and the Peripatetics; the fourth the Stoics, who derive from Antisthenes and the Cynics; the fifth Epicurus and his followers, who descend from Democritus and Aristippus; the sixth is that of the Eclectics, founded by Potamon of Alexandria; and the last "sect" embraces the middle ages and extends to the contemporary period: it includes in fact the Arabs, the Averroists, and the Scholastics, and is "almost the same as that which still reigns today in the Universities" (*Les Réflexions*, pp. 313–314). Besides this division of the subject matter into sects, it is possible to identify a series of periods which correspond to the alternating vicissitudes of the historical development of philosophy. Born in Greece, philosophy at its beginnings, from Thales to Plato and Aristotle, enjoyed its period of greatest success: "we must recognise that right from its infancy philosophy began to produce such great geniuses and that it brought forth in its first babblings *tant de raison*, that its beginnings served as principles and even models for the following centuries". But it "very soon degenerated from the nobility of its birth, not finding in the following centuries anything similar to those great men who were its founders, and this purity which it preserved in its beginnings was very soon obscured by the multitude of sects which

subsequently arose. It then began to take on all the faces and the aspects which the passions of men gave it, according to the different tastes and the different interest which later became popular" (pp. 318 and 326). Spreading to Rome, philosophy became contemptible under the first emperors because of the intrigues and adulation, and began to revive under Hadrian and his successors. With the advent of Christianity the philosophy of the pagans "succumbed to extravagance because of its excesses", while that of the Christians perfected itself progressively in the purity of its doctrine and customs; "from this flowering of philosophy which reigned then because of the emulation of the Christians and the pagans we fell into a climate of barbarisms and ignorance, which cannot be deplored enough" (pp. 332, 336, 338).

The Arabs operated "a sort of revolution in letters, just as in they did in politics", adapting Aristotle to their subtle and abstract temperament, and they inspired the Scholastics, who are divided into three periods: ancient Scholasticism goes from Lanfranc of Canterbury, or rather from Peter Abelard, up until Albert the Great; middle Scholasticism goes from Albert to Durand of Saint Pourçain, and in this period "the doctrine of Aristotle was brought to the height of its reputation" thanks to Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus; and new Scholasticism goes up until Gabriel Biel and is characterised by the disputes between the various sects, in such a way that philosophy declined into pure formalism. The last phase is that of the modern philosophers, namely those of the seventeenth century. Rapin does not consider the age of Humanism and the Renaissance as a well-defined chronological period following on from Scholasticism, but seems to reduce the humanistic spirit to a series of attempts at innovation (from Peter of Abano and Raymond Lull to Cardano, Marsilius Ficinus to Reuchlin) partly contemporaneous with Scholasticism and on which – as we will see later on – he expresses a decidedly negative judgement.

1.3.4.3. The information set out above clearly reveals some of Rapin's more general historiographical theories regarding his overall evaluation of the different periods of thought. Among these theories it is worth examining in more detail that which concerns the Greek origin of philosophy, which is accompanied by an undervaluation of ancient Oriental philosophy, Egyptian in particular. Rapin presents the Egyptians as the "first philosophers in the world" and stresses the mystery with which the priests surrounded their doctrines. Immediately afterwards, however, he contests that fact that one can speak with any historical foundation of a philosophy existing before the Greeks: "In truth everything that is said of philosophy, before it was known in Greece, has so little foundation; and all the things that are said about it in the fragments of Sotion of Alexandria, Hermippus, and Hermodorus, which Diogenes Laertius speaks of, just as in Lucian's dialogue *The Runaways*, are so fabulous that I do not pretend to adhere to what is found in history regarding its origins, in such a way as to provide more reliable knowledge of it". Hence he affirms in the following pages that "Thales and Pythagoras were, properly speaking, the first two founders of ancient philosophy, one in Greece and the other in Italy". This reason of a methodological nature is also linked to a reason which pertains to the economy of the narration: "this highly mysterious philosophy of the Egyptians is so little unlike that of Pythagoras that the methods and the principles of the one and the other

are almost similar". It thus seems superfluous to stop and consider the Egyptians (pp. 317–319).

As for the more particular theories on the individual writers or philosophical schools, we must bear in mind – in harmony with the nature and the intended readership of the *Réflexions* – that we have before us, more than true historical judgements, a series of "reflections" expressed according to criteria of evaluation which are directly related to Rapin's doctrinal positions. Of Pythagoras he says that "his morality has nothing that is regulated: it is a series of nice maxims without any principle. [. . .] His doctrine of the two principles, the good and the bad, on which the Manichaeans founded their belief, is false: there is only one real principle of real things". Following Cicero, Socrates is seen as the first to write a moral philosophy; he taught us more to doubt than to know things and, as he was the leader of a series of sects, "he was also in some way the initiator of all the doubts that were formed in them". Rapin lingers over the theme of the Socratic demon, mentioning many ancient and modern interpretations (among which those of Pomponazzi and Montaigne), and concludes that this demon "was nothing other than the prudence he had acquired thanks to the experience he had of things and the reflections that he made regarding their happenings" (pp. 320–322, 386–387).

For his judgements on Plato and Aristotle we can look at the *Comparaison*, where these thinkers are the object of a more detailed analysis. The negative judgement of post-Aristotelian philosophy, understood as a "degeneration", is expressed in the condemnation of Stoicism and Epicureanism: the school of Zeno was full of "false virtue" (while that of Epicurus was full of "true vices") and his moral philosophy was "totally visionary", based on an "extravagant" principle. Rapin declares that Justus Lipsius was wrong in praising this moral philosophy and in finding it "so suited to our religion", but the logic of the Stoics is also the object of his criticism: they introduced a climate of dispute into Aristotle's logic and gave too much importance to terms ("In their school they hardly disputed anything but names and their meanings. And in this way they became the first authors of that philosophy which has been re-established in the last few centuries by the Nominalists"). Even more polemical is his opinion of Epicureanism, which is considered to be a two-faced doctrine: "Epicurus was a voluptuous politician, who wanted to please the delicate without scandalising the severe [. . .] He mentioned nothing but the totally pure pleasure of the soul when he spoke in public; but when he spoke to his confidents in the best hours, he changed his language". Rapin countered Gassendi's defence of the Epicurean concept of *voluptas* with quotations from Cicero, Horace, Plutarch, and "almost all the Fathers of the Church" (pp. 326, 377–378, 391–396).

Rapin's Aristotelian Scholastic orientation re-emerges significantly in his exaltation of Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus: "They were the two minds with the greatest capacity for philosophy in the last few centuries [. . .] and were it not for the misfortune of their times, in which barbarity reigned, they would have been comparable with the greatest philosophers of Antiquity". Despite deploring the degeneration of late Scholasticism into formalism, he does not condemn this movement *en bloc*, and indeed maintains its validity in the struggle against error, distinguishing between Scholasticism in itself and its degenerate members. On

the contrary, he shows no sympathy whatsoever for those authors (such as Lull, Cardano, and Paracelsus) who claimed to distance themselves from the philosophy of the schools and ended up in the extravagancies of alchemy and the cabbala, and he has a negative opinion of the attempts by Reuchlin and Ficino to revive, respectively, Pythagorism and Platonism ("These were the illnesses of those centuries, whose weakness is sufficiently demonstrated by these various *ragoûts* of philosophy, the differences of opinion, and the very instability of the minds which existed then") (pp. 341–344).

In this perspective the rise of modern philosophy is presented in a rather low key and, apart from a general reference to "amour des lettres", is explained by the "genius" of the different European nations, which gave rise to different ways of studying of philosophy. At the beginning of reflection XVIII on "philosophy in general" (which deals with modern philosophy) Rapin draws up a sort of table of the national philosophical attitudes, in which the greatest degree of completeness is awarded naturally to the France of the *grand siècle*; it is an interesting application to the field of philosophy of that "literature on national characteristics" which was particularly in vogue at the end of the seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth century (cf. Hazard, pp. 53–55; E. Garin, "Questioni di storiografia filosofica", *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia*, XXIX, 1974, p. 450).[12] These considerations of a general nature are followed by a review of the modern philosophers (seven in all, from the various European nations) "who have created most noise": the Italian Galileo, the English Bacon, Hobbes, and Boyle, the French Gassendi and Descartes, and the Flemish Van Helmont. By adding these judgements to those expressed in the reflections *De la philosophie en particulier*, we can build up the following picture: Galileo is considered to be "le plus bel esprit de tous" and "le père de la philosophie moderne"; he was the first to conceive of the design of modern physics, basing himself on the principles of Leucippus; "his method is linked to that of the Platonists; his

[12] *Les Réflexions*, pp. 344–345: "Enfin, comme l'amour des lettres et surtout de la philosophie se trouva renfermé dans l'Europe, les differentes nations s'y appliquerent diversement selon la diversité de leurs genies et de leurs inclinations. Les Espagnols devinrent subtils dans leurs raisonnemens, formalistes, metaphysiciens, par le caractere de leur esprit né à la dialectique et aux reflexions. Les Italiens prirent un air plus agreable, ils devinrent la plûpart curieux en belles idées. Les ouvrages de Niphus [...] leur donnerent de l'amour pour la philosophie d'Aristote, et les livres du cardinal Bessarion et de Marcile Ficin leur inspirerent de l'affection pour la philosophie de Platon, dont ils s'accomoderent mieux que les autres peuples, par la beauté de leur genie, naturellement vif, mais paresseux. Les François, qui se trouverent capables de toutes les sciences, embrasserent tout; et par ce caractere de capacité et de curiosité, ils copierent ce que les autres nations avoient de bon, et réussirent à tout. Les Anglois par cette profondeur de genie qui est ordinaire à leur nation, aimerent les methodes profondes, abstruses, recherchées; et par un attachement opiniastre au travail, s'appliquerent à observer la nature, encore plus que les autres nations, comme il paroist par les ouvrages qu'ils en ont donné au public. Les Allemans par la necessité, que le climat leur imposoit de se renfermer auprès du feu, et par la commodité de leurs hypocaustes, s'adonnerent à la Chymie, aussi bien que les autres peuples du nord. Ainsi les contrées meridionales contribuerent à rendre la philosophie profonde et subtile, les septentrionales à la rendre mecanique et laborieuse" (his opinion on the Spanish was to be taken up by Deslandes, *Histoire critique de la philosophie*, IV, p. 148).

style is pleasant and he hides his defects well thanks to his writing style: although he has copied many things from the first philosophers, it seems as though it is all his, and it is taken as being original in certain places where he is nothing but a copyist" (pp. 345 and 420–421). Bacon is "a vague mind who never gets to the bottom of anything: his extra large *capacité* prevents him from being exact. Most of his opinions are rather proposals to be meditated on that maxims to be followed; his ideas have something subtle and brilliant about them and, if they are properly considered, resemble the sparks from a fire rather than a single natural light". His *organum* "is not methodical: it is a series of curious fantasies which derive from nothing but the excessive passion this author has of making himself known for his new ideas. There is nothing less solid than those four idols which he posits as the principles of all things. Everything is metaphorical and there is nothing literal" (pp. 345 and 382). Hobbes is "obscure without pleasure, singular in his ideas, learned but not very solid, inconstant in his teaching, since he is at times an Epicurean and at times a Peripatetic", while Boyle is "exact in his observations: there is no one in Europe who has enriched philosophy with such great experiments as he has". Gassendi "has almost nothing of his own, if not the beauty of his style which renders him worthy of admiration"; in his theory of motion he follows Galileo, "for the rest he is an Epicurean mitigated for conscience' sake; [. . .] to confute his physics it is enough to use Aristotle's arguments against Democritus and his followers" (pp. 345–346 and 422).

The most interesting opinions are naturally those on Descartes, whom Rapin respects and admires: the greatest champion of modern philosophy is not subjected to a headlong attack, but to a critical re-dimensioning, while his followers are the object of the Jesuit's sharp criticism. Descartes is defined "among the most extraordinary geniuses to have appeared in recent times, of fertile intellect and profound meditation: the concatenation of his doctrine reaches its goal, its order is well imagined, according to principles, and his system, though it is a mixture of ancient and modern, is well constructed. In truth", and here one of Rapin's typical forms of argumentation insinuates itself, "he teaches us too much to doubt, and this is not a good model for naturally incredulous spirits; but in the end he is more original than the others". Cartesian physics is set out in a fairly detailed way and it is criticised on several points; Descartes is placed beside those Pythagoreans Aristotle speaks of in the *De coelo*, "who tried less to give a reason for the things they explained than to reduce everything to their principles and their system"; however Rapin recognises that "when we are reasonable enough to content ourselves with verisimilitude, we can find something to be satisfied with in this physics. However one cannot always approve of the arrogance of most of his followers, who treat all the other philosophers as ignorant; because having first dazzled our minds with new language, they made a lot of noise, as all novelty does". As for the *cogito* doctrine, according to Rapin it presents something defective: "the proposition 'I think', as it has to reduce itself to the other proposition, 'I am thinking', that is, 'I am, therefore I am', has something frivolous about it (*fait un sens frivole*)". Nothing "is less methodical than his *Discourse on the Method*. It is a mixture of ethics, physics, and metaphysics, which establishes hardly anything. In the end we find certain characteristics of

sincerity which make us see right to the bottom of this mind, above all when he says, in the frankest way in the world, that through philosophy we only acquire the means of speaking with verisimilitude of all things, and of making ourselves admired by those who are less well educated" (pp. 346, 383–384, 423–426).

The last and the "most naturalist" of the great modern philosophers is Franciscus Mercurius Van Helmont (1614–1699), who devoted himself to the occult sciences and to alchemy in particular and whom Rapin accuses of having adhered too closely to the theories of Paracelsus and of having "overturned all the principles of Aristotle without any reason" in one of his treatises on logic (pp. 346 and 383). Besides these writers there are others who are mentioned only in the reflections *De la philosophie en particulier*: these are important figures such as Campanella (who is considered to be a visionary), Suárez (whose metaphysical work is highly praised and recommended "to young theologians, who abandon Scholasticism because of the false taste of a new method in their disputes to become historians"), and Henry More (whose confutations of Descartes' arguments are stressed); but we also find minor figures to whom Rapin attaches great importance, such as the French court physician and academic Marin Cureau de La Chambre, who died a few years before the publication of the *Réflexions* and who is emphatically judged to be "le plus poly et le plus solide de tous les philosophes modernes", or the Jesuit Honoré Fabri († 1688), whose logical work is considered to the most perfect of those to have come out in the modern age (pp. 384, 422, 428, 438, 441). In the *Réflexions sur la philosophie en général* the historical review concludes, as we have said, with a comparison between ancient and modern philosophy, which stresses not only the differences in principles and method, but also the psychological and moral attitude.[13] Referring to Montaigne, Rapin declares himself for the ancients, whose *bon sens* he appreciates above all, but he refuses to contrast ancient and modern reason, since there is only one reason and the truth is worthy of praise wherever it comes from. In the following

[13] *Les Réflexions*, pp. 346–347: "La philosophie ancienne est plus fondée en autorité, et la moderne plus fondée en experience; l'ancienne est simple, naturelle, la moderne est artificieuse et recherchée; la premiere est plus modeste et plus grave, la seconde a un air plus imperieux et plus pedant. L'ancienne est paisible et tranquille: car bien loin de disputer, elle vouloit qu'on preparast l'esprit des jeunes gens, par les mathematiques, pour les accoûtumer à se soumettre à la demonstration sans hesiter; la moderne s'est fait un art de disputer de tout, et d'exercer la jeunesse au bruit et au tumulte de l'école. L'ancienne ne cherche la verité que par un desir sincere de la trouver, la moderne prend plaisir à la combattre quand même elle l'a trouvée. L'une marche un peu plus seurement dans sa methode, parce qu'elle a toujours la metaphysique pour guide. L'autre n'est point sure dans ses demarches, quand elle est une fois dépourveuë de cette conduite. La constance, la fidelité, le bon sens, la fermeté estoit ce qu'on appelloit philosophie, au temps de Platon. Et le dégoût des affaires, le chagrin, le renoncement aux plaisirs, quand l'usage s'en est perdu par l'amortissement des passions, je ne sçay quelle autorité qui vient de la barbe grise, la fausse fierté, la phlegme, la moderation, et toute cette sagesse qui naist de la foiblesse de l'âge et du temperament, est la philosophie de bien de gens d'aujourd'hui [...]". This comparison between ancient and modern philosophy was to be quoted, regarding "common sense", by Father Gioacchino Ventura in his *Schiarimenti sulla quistione del fondamento della certezza, tratti da' principii della scuola tomistica* (Rome, 1829), pp. 28–29. Ventura, Jesuit then Theatine, was well aware of Rapin's works, also quoting his *Comparaison de Platon et d'Aristote* (*ibi*, pp. 17–18).

reflections XX–XXI Rapin examines the two extremes to be avoided when taking a position concerning the ancient and modern philosophers: "the first is that of those who, because of the good opinion they have of themselves, find nothing comparable to their own century. [. . .] They speak to us of freedom only to impose a new yoke on us [. . .] and they want to destroy Aristotle's credit only to establish that of Descartes. [. . .] The other extreme to be avoided is the attachment that we sometimes have, without reason, to the ancients: one worships their authority because of a blind preoccupation with their merit" (pp. 348–350).

1.3.4.4. The *Préface* to the *Réflexions sur la philosophie* also contains some remarks of a methodological nature. "The greatest difficulty in this work", observes the author, "has been to give some form to such a vast subject, since not even the number of the various sects has been properly established yet, even after so many authors have written on them. Plutarch in fact does not distinguish between them at all, and Diogenes Laertius confuses them. Varro numbers up to 288 of them and Themistius up to 300. But since this scheme would in itself be immense, I have reduced all these sects to 7 principal ones. [. . .] As for the style, I have merely aimed to express myself simply, in a subject that does not require any form of refined embellishment. I have not gone into any discussion of the theories which they put forward in the School, so as not to sadden us: I merely limit myself to the general ideas without going into detail regarding anything. In this I have tried to imitate Cicero, who in his books on philosophy hardly ever involves himself with details of the opinions of which he speaks. [. . .] He merely sets out the principles of each sect and the general doctrines, which he accompanies with several reflections. This is what I have done too, with the aim of adapting myself to the taste of a century in which we are less impressed by great erudition than by good sense . . ." (*Les Réflexions*, pp. 313–315). On a methodological level, the nature of the *Réflexions* as a lively populist book, therefore, leads Rapin to use simplifying criteria to divide his subject matter, and to abandon a systematic framework of the "life-works-doctrine" type in his exposition, in such a way that the biographies of the individual writers are all omitted. Rapin does not present a unitary vision of the history of philosophy, but has recourse to the combined use of two distinct and parallel structures: in the *Réflexions sur la philosophie en général* he draws a general outline of the history of philosophy within the framework of the sects, stressing the *caractère* of the various philosophers; in the *Réflexions sur la philosophie en particulier* he lingers over the doctrinal content, organised according to the four-part theoretical division revived from the classical genre of the *placita philosophorum*. As for his sources, Rapin specifically declares that he has "consulted most of the learned men of all centuries on these subjects. Which", he goes on, "obliges me to declare in the first place that I say virtually nothing of my own, and that I only speak of the ancients and the moderns through the judgements of those who have come to know them better than me. Those who are perspicacious will readily understand [. . .] the truth of what I say, without me having to warn them, so as not to overload with quotations a book which is already only too full" (p. 312). In practice, Rapin takes care over the bibliographical information since his "reflections" are furnished

with a rich apparatus of sources, prevalently ancient; that used most is Cicero, for whom Rapin reveals a particular sympathy, as was also evident in the passage quoted above.

1.3.5. *La comparaison de Platon et d'Aristote*

1.3.5.1. The work takes up pages 269–432 of the *Comparaisons des grands hommes de l'antiquité* (1693 ed.). After the dedicatory letter, this too addressed to Lamoignon (pp. 271–274), and the *Avertissement* to the reader (pp. 275–279), it is divided into four parts, each subdivided into titled chapters. Part I (pp. 280–314, 5 chapters) includes a historical introduction, the biography of Plato and Aristotle, and a comparison of their behaviour and their minds. Part II (pp. 315–332, 2 chapters) is devoted to a comparison of their methods, while Part III (pp. 333–363, 8 chapters) is reserved for their doctrine (logic, ethics, physics, and metaphysics). Part IV (pp. 364–419, 6 chapters) deals with the fortune of the two philosophers and is followed by a final chapter divided into 25 untitled paragraphs containing "several Christian reflections on this discourse" (pp. 419–432). The discussion has no indices and has marginal notes with bibliographical references.

1.3.5.2. In his discussion of philosophical thought, which revolves around the figures of Plato and Aristotle, Rapin distinguishes a first period, which goes from Thales and Pythagoras up to Plato and signals the birth of philosophy; this is dealt with in Chapter II of Part I (*De la naissance de la philosophie, et de l'état où elle estoit avant Platon et Aristote*). The history of Platonism and Aristotelianism, on the other hand, is divided into three distinct periods, which correspond to the division of the chapters of Part IV: the first period goes up until the birth of Christ; the second includes the first eight centuries of the Christian era and ends with the decline of all schools of thought, due to the *malheur du siècle* and the lack of interest of the emperors of the East in philosophical research; and the third embraces the following eight centuries, arriving up to Rapin's age.

1.3.5.3. The *Comparaison de Platon et d'Aristote* also presents the theory of the Greek origin of philosophy, but with more arguments than are given in the *Réflexions*. Rapin admits that the ancient peoples of the East knew some parts of philosophy, but he points out that "all these peoples only knew these things through simple experience, and they had not yet reduced to rules the knowledge that they had acquired". He judged the ancient traditions relating to Orpheus, Hermes Trismegistus, and Zoroaster to be fabulous or false; "as for the Hebrews, who were without doubt the first sages, since they were the first peoples, it seems that they entrenched themselves in the study of their religion without applying themselves to philosophy"; in the Bible Solomon is said to have been a great "naturalist", but it is not said that he left any writings (*Les Comparaisons*, pp. 283–284). Philosophy is therefore distinct from empirical wisdom and from religion, and it is identified with the work of conceptual systematization expressed in writing. In his account of pre-Platonic thought, Rapin gives ample space, besides Socrates, to Pythagoras and his school. Rapin does not accept the more fantastic notions (such as that regarding

the circumcision of Pythagoras), but accepts as true that this philosopher had read the Mosaic books, from which he derived "the idea of those symbolic and figurative expressions of philosophy, which he used to make it more agreeable". An analogous affirmation is made regarding Plato's journey to Egypt, where he may have had "some knowledge of the books of Moses through the Hebrews, whose number had greatly increased in Egypt as a result of their emigration" (pp. 286–287 and 295).

The first comparison between Plato and Aristotle revolves around their moral and intellectual personality and is made at the end of the biographies of the two philosophers, on the basis of the judgements already expressed by the ancients. On a moral plane Plato was of "purer and more innocent" customs than Aristotle and of "more honest sentiments towards his friends and also more religious towards the Gods". Plato's mind is "more brilliant and more refined", that of Aristotle, "vaster and more profound". "One surprises the mind and dazzles it with his splendid and ornate character (*par un caractère éclatant et fleury*); the other enlightens it and educates it with a just and solid method. [. . .] Finally, Plato often merely thinks of speaking well, and Aristotle thinks only of thinking well" (pp. 311–314). The "method" followed by the two thinkers is different therefore: Plato's is not very reliable because of his free genius, his style little inclined to rules, and his intention to doubt everything; that of Aristotle is more simple and at the same time more certain because it is based on well-established principles. Rapin identifies four methods in Plato, the first and the most well-known of which is that of the dialogue, in which the philosopher gives a full display of his genius, alien to all systematic treatment. The second method is that of definition and division, which is derived from Socrates and represents "the most universal tool" in the dialogical process. The third "consists of explaining human things with divine ones, sensible things with intellectual ones, particulars with universals, images and copies with the ideas which are its first models". Rapin compares this method (inherited from Socrates, who in turn allegedly took it from an Indian visiting Athens) with the *via sapientiae* which Augustine speaks of in the *De Trinitate*: "This Father had learnt this method from Plato, whom he had greatly studied; and if we follow it and penetrate it without stopping at the outer coating, as most of those who read it do, we find that he often merely explains things with the relationship they have with their origin, particular things with universal things, sensible things which appear with those that do not appear: and it is for this method in particular that St. Augustine must be considered a Platonist, as can be seen in the way in which he explains Grace". The fourth method, finally, which is "even more hidden than the others, consists in explaining the truth of things by means of their figures" and this in order to render the doctrines more mysterious and hence worthier of respect (pp. 315–323).

In contrast to Plato, Aristotle bases his method on the principle that there is a science and that it proceeds from particular and sensible things to general and immaterial things; he distrusts the method of division and uses instead the demonstrative or syllogistic method, which is "the most perfect of all" and is used for the doctrinal systematization of Christianity. These themes are taken up again in the account of the logic of the two philosophers: Rapin stresses that, if it was

Archytas, Zeno, Euclid, and Plato who invented the "matter" of dialectic, the merit must go to Aristotle for having created the "form" by inventing "the art of the perfect demonstration", namely that syllogism which is "the universal principle of all the sciences"; "and it is with this marvellous art that this philosopher has been able to find the means to give thought, which is totally spiritual, the same rule which is imposed on quantity, which is totally material; and to establish in the reasoning of the human mind and its operations, which are essentially free and contingent, an infallibility equal to that which is found in geometrical demonstrations, which are essentially necessary". It follows from this that "all the forms of logic of the other ancient and modern philosophers are valid to the extent to which they are connected to the logic of Aristotle [. . .] which is the yardstick of all the others" (pp. 333–339).

On the moral plane too, the comparison between Plato and Aristotle resolves itself in favour of the latter. Rapin observes indeed that "Aristotle's ethics is too human and too closed within the limits of this life; he proposes hardly any other happiness for man that that of the civil life"; on the other hand, "Plato's ethics is nobler and higher; it is a preparation for a purer and more perfect life, and he maintains in his *Alcibiades I* that this life is a semblance of the life of God: in this he infinitely exceeds Aristotle". Rapin however is ready to criticise Plato's ethics for its lack of a true philosophical rigour. "But after all, what Plato says regarding the beauty of virtue [. . .] he says less as a philosopher than as a declaimer: he supposes things without proving them, wants to please the spirit without worrying about convincing it. Aristotle on the other hand, affirms nothing without establishing it on rational bases". Rapin considers his ethical works to be Aristotle's masterpiece, and he praises him above all as a master of "good sense" and stops to quote some examples from them. In particular he stresses the observations contained in Chapter III of Book VII of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, "where Aristotle teaches us that in the deliberations of human actions it is the heart that decides and concludes, not the mind (*esprit*)"; and in this observation we can see a criticism of the rationalistic ethics of Cartesianism (pp. 346–350).

Rapin's account of Plato and Aristotle's teachings on physics is preceded by several observations on the intrinsic limits of any investigation into nature, which is "a subject of opinion rather than science".[14] Scientific relativism is one of the dominant themes of Rapin's thought, and he does not intend to grant physics that eminent place which it was beginning to hold in modern thought, maintaining instead the superiority of metaphysics, which – if carried out with a rigorous demonstrative method – leads to a degree of certainty which physics can never attain. This theoretical position translates itself into a critical, or at least circumspect, attitude with regard to modern philosophers, and, on the other hand, into a robust apology for Aristotelian physics. Rapin notes polemically that in "particular physics" (regarding the heavens, the stars, and meteors) Aristotle "explains more things than all

[14] *Les Comparaisons*, p. 350: "Il n'y a rien où l'esprit de l'homme ait moins penetré que dans la connoissance de la nature. Il semble que Dieu ait prit plaisir d'exposer le monde en veuë, comme le plus bel ouvrage de sa Toute-puissance, et de cacher à mesme-tems à nos yeux les ressorts de cette vaste machine".

the modern philosophers put together, because he reaches the smallest details of every thing": the discoveries in the field of acoustics, announced by Galileo and Descartes, for example, had already been made by Aristotle, who even knew of the circulation of the blood as studied by Harvey. Indeed Rapin is amazed that the moderns have criticised Aristotle's errors in geography, astronomy, zoology, etc., which are in reality imputable to the lack of suitable tools (pp. 353–355 and 417; see also p. 362, where Aristotelian physics is judged to be "the most reasonable, and the most well-founded of all"). As for a comparison of their metaphysical doctrines, Rapin considers Aristotle "the most real and the surest in all his solutions", while Plato "abandons himself too much to his own thoughts to allow himself to be corrupted by the false teachings learnt from the Egyptians". Rapin also mentions the tradition which juxtaposes the three Platonic principles with the Christian Trinity, pointing out that Plato's distinction "is purely natural and cannot be compared with this Mystery because of the inequality and the dependence which Plato establishes between these three principles"; he judges the Fathers' theory that Plato knew the books of Moses, however, as not without foundation (pp. 356–359).

The lengthy comparison between the two greatest philosopher of Antiquity closes with a sort of apotheosis of Aristotle, in a clearly anti-modern key: the works of Aristotle alone would have ensured the immortality of fifty writers; in the field of the sciences merely by following the rules established by Aristotle it is possible to write in a "solid, exact, regular" manner; as for the modern philosophers, their physical doctrines are nothing but a revival of ancient atomism … (p. 360). Presenting the usefulness of the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle, Rapin distinguishes their respective spheres of competence, making Aristotle a model in the field of philosophy and Plato a model in that of poetry and oratory: "By reading Plato we acquire that fertility of the imagination and that beauty of the spirit which develops eloquence and what there is of grace in *belles lettres*; and the reading of Aristotle forms our judgement by means of the precision that it impresses onto our thought, all of whose defects it corrects. Plato trains the orators and the poets. […] This method which he has of explaining things with their ideas and of saying not what they are like but what they should be like, which he took from Homer, has formed all the great men of his time and those that have been great subsequently. It is on this model that Euripides, Sophocles, Demosthenes, Hyperides, Aeschines, Demades, Lysias, Pindar, Carneades, Cicero, and Virgil were educated: in fact they are all Platonists; as is the method of Aristotle which has formed Theophrastus, Philoxenus, Demetrius Phalereus, Galen, Boethius, Avicenna, Averroes, Alexander of Hales, St. Thomas, and what is solid in the great sciences. Therefore it really is to deceive oneself to look for models elsewhere than in these two authors […]. One could perhaps have recourse to these authors to recover from the bad taste we find in most modern philosophers, who believe that the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle is too ancient for the *esprits à la mode*, and that it is possible to become wise without Plato and without Aristotle" (p. 362).

Moving on now to the "fortune" of the two philosophers, this is presented by Rapin in exactly the reverse fashion. In the first period, the flowering of Platonism, which was only partially contrasted by the Stoic and the Epicurean sect, corresponds

to the "obscurity" into which Aristotle fell because of the disappearance of his writings, which Rapin speaks of at length. The success of Plato's thought grew with the adherence to it of the first Fathers, which Rapin explains with extrinsic reasons (the decline of Stoicism and Epicureanism, and the lack of knowledge of Aristotle) and intrinsic reasons (Platonism seemed to be the pagan philosophy "least opposed to the principles of our religion"). Very quickly, however, "the poison hidden under the flowers was found" and Plato was accused of being the father of heresies and of scepticism. Aristotle on the other hand was initially condemned by the Fathers, "but his reputation subsequently increased as people gradually applied themselves to learn it; on the contrary that of Plato diminished to the extent to which it was examined". In the end it was recognised "that this art of reasoning taught by Aristotle had nothing false in it, that he was also very solid and could be of some use to our religion, which does not cease to conform to reason, even though it is supernatural" (pp. 364–393).

The eclipse of Plato lasted until the 15th century, when the Councils of Basle and Florence and the fall of Constantinople contributed towards "re-establishing the glory" of this philosopher, to the point that in Italy most of the most famous intellectuals became Platonists. "Nevertheless", Rapin hastens to explain, "Marsilius Ficinus took things too far because of the transport that he had for this philosophy, since he decided too lightly to base the doctrines of our faith on those of Plato". His exaggerations "made many people find in this philosophy an inclination to non-belief, [...]. It was for the principles of this doctrine that Pico della Mirandola, who was an ardent proponent of it, fell into error, Pietro Aretino into libertinism, Cremonini, Pomponazzi [?!], and others into incredulity ..." (p. 399; the disconcerting placing of Pomponazzi and Cremonini among the "Platonists" is perhaps an oversight on the part of the author, but we must bear in mind that in the discussion of modern Aristotelianism he makes no mention of the naturalistic and heterodox currents of which these thinkers were the most well-known representatives). Platonic philosophy was thus again judged "vain" and "dangerous" and ended up by falling into disuse: "It can be said, to conclude the history of Plato's doctrine, that it is of little use in this century, in which destiny has confined it to the libraries and the studies of some orator who tries to shine in the pulpit or the law court, since in effect his speech has something of the magnificent in it". On a strictly philosophical plane "the only good use that can be made of Plato is that which Saint Augustine made of it, to reduce the things of which we speak to their perfection by means of their ideas, to create true pictures of them" (p. 401).

This definitive decline of Platonism corresponds to the success of Aristotle's thought, whose revival took place thanks to the Arabs, who inspired Thomas Aquinas and who also mark the origin of the subsequent corruption of philosophy: "these barbaric terms, which our philosophers have used without scruple, were taken from Avicenna and from the other Arabs, to whom such manners were undoubtedly natural and familiar [...] It is also probable that this bad taste on the part of the Arabs, who had little knowledge of *belles lettres*, established itself in the schools of Europe, as the bad taste of the Goths established itself in architecture and in the other arts" (p. 408). Once it became the "rule and model for all philosophies",

Aristotle's thought degenerated in the fourteenth century because of the "furious emulation" among the various sects and because of excessive subtlety, which led in part to the loss of the "solid character" that is proper to it. Considerations of a confessional nature appear clearly when Rapin declares that "nothing gave more honour to the doctrine of this great man [= Aristotle] in the last century than the atrocious invectives of Luther, Melanchthon, Bucer, Calvin, Postel, Paolo Sarpi, and all those who then wrote against the Roman Church. They complained about Aristotle only because the solidity of his method gives the Catholics a great advantage in discovering the tricks and artifice of false reasoning which heresy uses to mask lies and destroy truth" (p. 412). Rapin stresses the diffusion of Aristotle in all the European universities and "such universal consensus of all nations on the esteem that is had for him everywhere", and he tends to minimise the importance of anti-Aristotelianism, equating it with the desire for novelty and the ambition to place oneself at the head of a new school.[15]

The history of the fortune of Plato and Aristotle ends therefore by confirming on a historical plane the superiority of Aristotle which had already been demonstrated on a theoretical one. In reality the true antagonist of Aristotle is not Plato (whose current validity is confined to the field of eloquence), but the thought of the "moderns" who have radically called into question the authority of Aristotle and threaten that triumph which Rapin strives to preserve by appealing to the "universal consensus" of institutionalised culture and discrediting those movements of thought which originated outside the university. Yet Rapin shows himself to be critically aware of the limits present not in Aristotle (who here too is the object of an impassioned apology), but in his modern followers, who do not know their master well enough and whom he recommends go straight to the works themselves or to the most ancient commentaries on them, in such a way as to avoid the "disorder" introduced by late Scholasticism. In fact they "will no longer recognise the true Aristotle in the middle of the different interpretations which have fundamentally distorted his doctrine. [. . .] But it can be said with some certainty that nothing has authorized the new opinions as much as the bad way in which Aristotle's philosophy has been spread about for some time by some speculative thinkers who have attempted to pass themselves off as the most devoted followers of his doctrine. It seems indeed that people have only taken it into their heads to run after the modern philosophies because of the lack of satisfaction to be had from that which is being taught today under the name of Aristotle. This disorder continues because most of those who teach it copy from one another, without going back to the source to draw on this doctrine in its

[15] *Les Comparaisons*, pp. 413–414: "Il est vray que quelques particuliers de ces derniers temps ont parlé peu favorablement de luy. [. . .] Mais il est à remarquer que c'estoient des gens qui s'estoient mis dans la teste de se faire chefs de parti, et de dresser de nouveaux plans de philosophie, aussi bien que Hobbes, Digby et Des-Cartes, qui ont ramassé de vieux fragmens de philosophie de Démocrite, d'Épicure, de Nicetas, de Seleucus et de quelques autres anciens, pour se faire auteurs d'une nouvelle philosophie, qu'ils croyoient ne pouvoir établir qu'en détruisant celle d'Aristote, qui estoit la plus estimée de toutes. Nous avons vu naistre ces philosophies, et nous les verrons finir".

purity. But although it seems useless to oppose this disorder, which has become solidly established because of the previous century's lack of taste, and which the Spaniards' natural tendency to idleness, together with their phlegm, has made possible thanks to a speculation too abstract and too metaphysical [Rapin seems to be referring here to exponents of Later Scholasticism, most of them Spanish], I will not cease to say that it would be desirable, in order to re-establish Aristotle's true doctrine in its purity, for those who have some zeal for philosophy to take the pains to study it in the simplicity in which it was written by he himself and was explained by his first commentators" (pp. 415–416).

1.3.5.4. In the *Comparaison de Platon et d'Aristote* the discussion of pre-Platonic philosophy is more complete and more unified than it is in the *Réflexions sur la philosophie*, since the most important thinkers are also given a biographical profile, followed by an account of their doctrines. Heir of the Renaissance debates between the Platonists and the Aristotelians, this *comparaison* is structured around a series of parallel chapters ("The person of Plato"/"The person of Aristotle", "The method of Plato"/"The method of Aristotle") giving rise to a true monograph constructed around a tripartite division into life, method, and doctrines. As for the history of Platonism and Aristotelianism, right from the beginning this goes beyond the traditional diadochistic framework and takes the form of a narration which tends to be discursive and *agréable* rather than systematic, but which seems in any case to be well-documented as to its sources. Besides Laertius, Cicero, and other classical authors, Rapin makes use of the Fathers, the ancient Aristotelian commentators (including Averroes), Marsilius Ficinus, and other fifteenth- and sixteenth-century writers such as G. F. Pico, Pierre de La Ramée, Francesco Patrizi, and Jacopo Mazzoni (whose *In universam Platonis et Aristotelis philosophiam praeludia, sive de comparatione Platonis et Aristotelis, liber primus* resembles Rapin's in its title, but differs in its syncretistic orientation; the *Comparaison de Platon et d'Aristote* on the other hand can be compared to Trapezuntius' *Comparatio Platonis et Aristotelis* for its pro-Aristotelian stance; Trapezuntius is mentioned by Rapin on p. 397 in connection with the fifteenth-century disputes between Platonists and Aristotelians). Among more recent scholars only Casaubon is mentioned, regarding a statement in defence of Aristotle contained in the notes to his edition of Laertius (*Les Comparaisons*, p. 414). Absent however is any mention of de Launoy's *De varia Aristotelis fortuna*; such a silence may perhaps be attributed to de Launoy's Gallican sympathies or to his suspected Jansenism. Rapin also adds repeated quotations from the works of Plato (the *Timaeus* in particular) and above all Aristotle.

1.3.6. For an overall evaluation of Rapin's two histories of philosophy we must bear in mind above all their context and their audience. They do not present themselves as works in their own right, even though they have an autonomous structure compared to other *comparaisons* and *réflexions*, but are works "concernant les belles lettres", and this literary nature is reflected in the method and the style in which the historiographical discourse is developed. More than systematic discussions for experts, the *Réflexions sur la philosophie* and the *Comparaison de Platon et d'Aristote* are populist *abrégés* destined for a wide public of "honnestes hommes"

and of "gens de qualité" whom Rapin explicitly addresses. As such they respond to the need for cultural information which came from the highest levels of late seventeenth-century French society, in which the idea of the "honneste homme" (that is to say the gentleman of good manners and pleasant conversation, with a varied if not particularly profound culture) had supplanted the brutality and ostentatious ignorance that had characterised the nobility at the beginning of the reign of Louis XIV. Within these structural limits Rapin's works represent the most conspicuous product – Bayle aside – of French philosophical historiography until Deslandes' *Histoire critique*. They use the various forms of historiography inherited from the classical tradition (historiography by sects, by *placita*, diadochistic, biographical), and distance themselves from the contemporary erudite *historia philosophica*, taking on the characteristics of a true historiography according to themes, in which an important and at times predominant place is given to an evaluation of the doctrines. Furthermore they constitute a singular union between a "modern" literary form, suited to the taste of the times, and a decidedly "anti-modern" content, which aims at recovering the true Aristotle in a polemic not only against the new philosophies but also against the more recent Aristotelian commentators.

The interest aroused by Rapin's literary, philosophical, and religious *engagement* is reflected first of all in the reviews which appeared on more than one occasion in the most important journals of the time. The Paris edition of the *Comparaisons* and the *Réflexions* (1684) was signalled in the "Acta eruditorum" which dwelt in particular on the last part of the *Comparaison de Platon et d'Aristote*, defined as most pleasant (*iucundissima*). Rapin's insistence on affirming the dangers of renaissance Platonism and in defending Aristotle is such, observes the reviewer, "as to go beyond what the title itself promises". As for the reasons Rapin adopts to explain the anti-Aristotelianism of Luther and the other reformers, they are implicitly rejected with the observation that they are to be attributed to the author's religious habit (AE, 1686, p. 197). An analogous reservation is expressed by the editor of de Launoy's *Opera omnia*, the abbé François Granet, who in a note to Chapter XIV of the *De varia Aristotelis fortuna* regarding the anti-Aristotelianism of Guillaume Postel, invites the reader to weigh up Rapin's judgement and declare what its effective value is. The same Granet, however, had previously quoted the *Comparaison de Platon et d'Aristote* as a source to correct an oversight on the part of de Launoy, who had mistaken the controversy between Bessarion and Trapezuntius with another controversy on ecclesiological questions between Bessarion and Mark of Ephesus (de Launoy, *De varia Aristotelis fortuna*, pp. 199n, 213n; cf. also Jo. Hermannus ab Elswich, *De varia Aristotelis in scholis protestantium fortuna schediasma* (Wittenberg, 1720), pp. 30–31, in which Rapin's controversial opinion against the reformers is attributed to ignorance, imprudence, or malice; on Elswich, see below, Chapter 5, Introduction). In 1686 a lengthy account of Rapin's two works was given in the *Bibliothèque universelle*, which abstained from judgement, while in his *Mémoires* Nicéron hinted only at the contents of the *Comparaisons*. The *Mémoires* of Trévoux in turn reviewed the 1702 edition, appreciating in particular Rapin's "méthode de comparaison". In the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* Bayle expressed a positive judgement on the Jesuit's historiographical works and in the

Dictionnaire often referred to them, pointing out however several errors of interpretation (see below, Chapter 2, para 2.1.3.6.; cf. Dorn's judgement; "His *Réflexions sur la philosophie* contain many things worthy of note, and of no easy access in any one place, but he has written in a rather confused way. Bayle teaches us many things regarding this [. . .] Here and there in his *Dictionnaire* he has pointed out many flaws": Jonsius, p. 182).

The impact of Rapin's works on the genre of the history of philosophy is documented by the hidden use made of it by Coste in his *Discours sur la philosophie*, even though he is highly polemical against Rapin's fundamental theory, and by the use which authors such as Valletta, Capasso, Le Gendre de Saint Aubin, and Deslandes make of it. There is no reference to the two works in the *Acta philosophorum* and the *Historia critica* of Brucker, who quotes the *Comparaison* however in his *Otium Vindelicum* (Augsburg, 1729, p. 81). The most interesting and also most unexpected episode in Rapin's fortune as a historian of philosophy, however, is constituted by the German translation of the *Réflexions sur la philosophie* by Johann Georg Hamann, quoted above, which is included in the *Königsberger Notizbuch I*, a collection of notes, schemas, translations, etc, relating to the years 1753–1756, from which there emerges a picture of Hamann's vast and disparate youthful reading. Besides the 1686 edition of the *Réflexions sur l'éloquence, la poétique, l'histoire et la philosophie* (of which he translated only the latter), Hamann also possessed the 1709 edition of the *Comparaisons des grands hommes de l'antiquité*, which figures in the printed catalogue of his library, which came out in 1776. He did not leave anything which might serve to clarify the reason that led him to translate Rapin's history of philosophy. "We cannot say", observes Pupi to this regard, "whether the role played by Rapin's little work in the education of Hamann really was extraordinary, nor whether it was a guide to the young man in acquiring his philosophical information: certainly the fluent and elegant translation testifies to a sympathy, just as an agreement in attitude is evident in Hamann's constant position with regard to pure speculation, to which he prefers an anchoring in religious tradition". Further on, hinting at Hamann's lack of faith in contemporary philosophy, whose "grandfather" is Descartes, and at his ironic comments on the *Discours de la méthode*, Pupi notes that "on the whole it seems that the guide Hamann follows in his diffidence towards Descartes and new thought is Rapin" (Hamann, *Scritti cristiani*, I, pp. 18–20). For his part, Braun (who does not seem to be aware of this aspect of Hamann's youthful reading) stresses the positions expressed by Hamann in his *Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten*, printed in Amsterdam in 1759, which includes a radical criticism of the histories of philosophy written by Stanley, Brucker, and Deslandes, considered lifeless works and the fruit of a purely erudite vision of history, which is contrasted with the need to re-live the past in its richness and ambiguity. Hamann, writes Braun, "rejects classical transparency, based on the scheme of a rational explanation of the world and history", and "requires the historian to understand the texts from their true place, that is to say to start from the place they occupy in relation to Christ, the only source of sense", in opposition to modern philosophers who, following Decartes's *cogito*, have sought to render philosophy independent of Christ (Braun, pp. 268–271). Although totally alien to mysticism, the *Réflexions sur*

la philosophie may have provided some inspiration for these themes in Hamann: the devaluation of scientific knowledge, the criticism of modern philosophy, and the principle that we must "learn to be Christians before philosophers, and not to be philosophers unless it is to become even greater Christians". Rapin's historiographical work, which is usually ignored as a product of the rearguard with respect to the affirmation of modern thought, thus reveals some unexpected implications, and may be among the sources used by an author such as Hamann, whom Braun placed at the beginning of the new romantic vision of the history of philosophy.

1.3.7. On Rapin's life, works, and cultural activity: *Éloge du P. Rapin*, HOS, I (1687), pp. 413–414; D. Bouhours, *Vie du P. Rapin* (Paris, 1723); Nicéron, XXXII, pp. 152–161; BUAM, XXXVII, pp. 91–96; Sommervogel, VI, cols. 1444–1458; DThC, XIII/2, col. 1663; Gillot, *La querelle des anciens et des modernes en France*, pp. 415–424; L. Cohen Rosenfield, "Peripatetics Adversaires of Cartesianism in 17th Century France", *The Review of Religion*, XXII (1957), pp. 16–19 (on Rapin's "hybrid Aristotelianism"); Spink, pp. 16, 192; J. Le Brun, "Le P. Pierre Lalemant et les débuts de l'Académie Lamoignon", *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*, LXI (1961), pp. 153–176; Martin, *Livres, pouvoirs et société*, pp. 651–653 (on the evolution of the nobility towards the ideal of the *honneste homme*); E.Th. Dubois, *René Rapin: l'homme et l'oeuvre* (Lille, 1972); D. Bosco, "*Honnête homme* et *politesse mondaine*. Un tema di morale secentesca", *Rivista di filosofia neo-scolastica*, LXXI (1979), p. 328; Fumaroli, *L'âge de l'éloquence*, pp. 417–418 and 621; R. de Rabutin Bussy, *Correspondance avec le père René Rapin*, ed. C. Rouben (Paris, 1983); E. Rapetti, *Percorsi anticartesiani nelle lettere a Pierre-Daniel Huet* (Florence, 2003), pp. 21–46; M.-P. De Weerdt-Pilorge, "L'écriture de la vérité. Les théoriciens de l'histoire. Saint-Réal, le père Rapin et Lenglet-Dufresnoy face aux mémorialistes", *Cahiers d'histoire culturelle*, XIV (2004), pp. 5–12.

On his fortune: *Giornale de' Letterati* (Rome, F. Nazari), II (1670–1671), p. 209; JS, 22nd June, 1676, pp. 151–156; AE, 1686, pp. 195–197, 268–270; BUH, I (1686), pp. 47–54, 178–182; NRL, March, 1686, in P. Bayle, *Oeuvres diverses* (The Hague, 1727–1731; facs. repr. Hildesheim, 1964–1968; Hildesheim – New York, 1982), I, pp. 524–525; MT, 1726, pp. 815–825; Bayle, *Dictionnaire* (Amsterdam, 1740; repr. Geneva, 1995), IV, pp. 34–36; Jonsius, p. 182. In the literary field it is interesting to note, among others, Muratori's critical observations on Chapter XXV of the *Réflexions sur la poétique de ces temps*, which came out in 1674 (L.A. Muratori, "Da *Della perfetta poesia italiana*", in *Opere*, eds. G. Falco and F. Forti (Milan-Naples, 1964), pp. 84–85).

On his work on the history of philosophy: R.H. Popkin, "The Traditionalism, Modernism and Scepticism of René Rapin", *Filosofia*, XV (1964), pp. 751–764; E. Garin, "La storia 'critica' della filosofia nel Settecento", in Id., *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo* (Pisa, 1970), pp. 259–260; Rak, p. 69; Braun, pp. 268–271 (on J.G. Hamann), 372 (which quotes the *Comparaison*); E.N. Tigerstedt, *The Decline and Fall of the Neoplatonic Interpretation of Plato* (Helsinki, 1974), p. 43; J.G. Hamann, *Scritti cristiani*, ed. A. Pupi (Bologna, 1975–1977), I, Intro., pp. 18–20; Del Torre, pp. 53, 137; Piaia, "European Identity and National Characteristics in the *Historia*

philosophica of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries", pp. 596–597; Azouvi, *Descartes et la France*, pp. 25–26 and 42; G. Belgioioso, "I 'Filosofi pezzenti' e gli *Honnêtes Hommes*. Immagini di Socrate nella cultura italiana del Seicento", in *Socrate in Occidente*, pp. 168–172.

1.4 Pierre de Villemandy (1636/1637–1703)

Manuductio ad philosophiae Aristoteleae, Epicureae, et Cartesianae parallelismum

1.4.1. Born in La Rochefoucauld into a Calvinist family, Pierre de Villemandy studied theology in Montauban and then worked as a pastor in the region of Saintonge. In 1664, he applied for the chair of philosophy at the Academy of Saumur (founded in 1599, this Protestant university enjoyed a great reputation throughout Europe and was considered the "second Geneva"), and found himself competing with Jean-Robert Chouet of Geneva, who was appointed to the position even though he was younger. The two were protagonists of a memorable confrontation, which had repercussions of a juridical nature and notable effects on a cultural plane: Chouet was in fact a fervid Cartesian and the first to introduce the *nouvelle philosophie* into the Academy of Saumur; for his part Villemandy, who remained linked to his peripatetic and scholastic training, was induced to open up to modern philosophy, and he moved to embrace eclectic positions like other university teachers of the time. In 1669 Chouet was called back to Geneva (where he had among his pupils Basnage, Leclerc, and Bayle) and he left the chair of Saumur free, which was then given to Villemandy without opening up the position to competition. Elected rector in 1676 he moved to Holland after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) and became rector of the Walloon theological college of Leiden; he died there in 1703.

1.4.2. In Saumur Villemandy wroted a *Dissertatio metaphysica de libertate hominis* (Saumur, 1673), and a *Manuductio ad philosophiam vetero-novam, in qua triplicis philosophiae* [. . .] *Aristoteleae nempe, Epicureae et Cartesianae placita* [. . .] *adducuntur et* [. . .] *conferuntur* (Saumur, 1674), 4°, which was reprinted another three times with a slightly different title: *Philosophiae Aristoteleae, Epicureae et Cartesianae, parallelismus, in quo triplicis huius disciplinae, in scholis hodie vigentis, placita perpetuo adducuntur et placide conferuntur* [. . .]. *Operi praefixa est manuductio* (Saumur: apud H. Desbordes, 1678), 4°, pp. 94 + 6 unnumbered containing the index (despite the title the work only contains the *Manuductio*); *Philosophiae veteris ac novae parallelismus, in quo ex perpetuo Aristoteleae, Epicureae ac Cartesianae doctrinae parallelo et conciliatione, quid in unaquaque re statuendum sit, deducitur. Volumen primum, logicam, metaphysicam generalem et pneumatologiam complectens* [. . .] *Operi praefixa est manuductio* (Amsterdam: typis H. Westenii, 1679), 2 parts in one vol., 4° (the first part includes the *Manuductio*, which is printed exactly like the previous edition: the second part, despite its title, only contains logic); *Manuductio ad philosophiae Aristoteleae, Epicureae, et Cartesianae parallelismum, in qua triplicis huius philosophiae, alteriusque cujusvis, tum veteris tum novae, conditio, partes, ordo partium, origo,*

processus, complementum, sectae, methodus ac usus asseruntur, conveniensque ex his philosophiae notio exprimitur (Amsterdam: apud Henricos Wetstenium & Debordes, 1685), 4°, 94 pp. + 6 not numbered (edition identical to the previous two). In Villemand's plans, the *Manuductio* was to be the introduction to a systematic course of philosophy, whose realisation stopped at logic, however. The little work opens with an analysis of the terms *sapientia* and *philosophia* (and here Horn's *Historia philosophica* is quoted) and goes on to define the aim, the object, the principles, and the nature of philosophy "according to the Aristotelians, the Epicureans, and the Cartesians". After dwelling on the problem of the existence of certain knowledge and the confutation of scepticism, Villemandy mentions the parts into which philosophy is divided and then deals with its origin and its "progress", providing a brief but complete history of philosophy; this is followed by an analysis of the "right method of philosophizing" and the use of philosophy, with which this little introductory handbook ends.

In Holland Villemandy published another two philosophical works: the *Traité de l'efficace des causes secondes contre quelques philosophes modernes, dans lequel on prouve cette efficace par des principes également clairs et solides, et on détermine jusques où elle s'estend* (Leiden: C. Jourdan, 1686), 12°, 184 pp., and the *Scepticismus debellatus, seu humanae cognitionis ratio ab imis radicibus explicata; ejusdem certitudo adversus scepticos quosque veteres ac novos invicte asserta; facilis ac tuta certitudinis hujus obtinendae methodus praemonstrata* (Leiden: apud C. Boutesteyn, 1697), 4°, 239 pp.. We must also note finally that Villemandy figures as an editor, together with Jan Leusden, of the third edition of the *Opera omnia* of the erudite Protestant theologian Samuel Bochart, which came out in Leiden in 1692. The *Scepticismus debellatus* is a systematic confutation of sceptic arguments, which was quoted in Bayle's *Dictionnaire* for the erudition and the good argumentation which it contains. In the first 5 of the 31 chapters into which the work is divided there is a historical review of ancient and modern scepticism, according to very wide-ranging criteria: even Descartes is not considered to be exempt from scepticism because he did not accept that the senses were capable of arriving at the *scientia rerum*. Scepticism is seen as an infection which spreads even to ethics (thanks to a number of scholastics such as Francisco Macedo, Rodrigo Arriaga, and Jean Lalemandet) and politics, with Machiavelli and his followers. Machiavellians, Hobbesians and Spinozists, libertines, deists, and atheists are made to correspond to the ancient followers of Carneades, "who made the most sacred laws of morals, politics, and religion vacillate" (*Scepticismus debellatus*, pp. 1–32). The *Manuductio* also reserves ample space for a criticism of scepticism, but the approach of the two works is different: while in the *Manuductio* the "dogmatic" philosophy of the Aristotelians, Epicureans, and Cartesians is contrasted with the more or less accentuated scepticism of the other schools, in the *Scepticismus debellatus*, as well as Descartes, even Epicureanism is accused, and only Aristotle and Plato seem to be immune from the sceptic disease.

1.4.3. In the *Manuductio* the role of the history of philosophy is not merely preparatory to the study of philosophy, but is more specifically related to Villemandy's speculative positions, which served an apologetic religious aim. Far from belonging

to the ranks of the *esprits forts* with which the 17th century abounded, Villemandy was very sensitive to the dangers which threaten the faith because of scepticism (which not only leaves the study of philosophy to "languish" and diminishes the "dignity of the arts", but also weakens religious *pietas*), and he gave philosophy the job, on the other hand, of demonstrating the principles which are at the basis of religion: "The foundations of theology are the existence of God, His providence, the immortality of the human mind, the enjoyment of the other life which follows this mortal and transient life, the immutable truth of Holy Scripture, and a few other principles of this type. The demonstration of all this is the task of the sole philosophy, namely natural theology" (*Manuductio*, 1685 ed., p. 94; see also p. 18 for a criticism of scepticism). An indicator of this attitude is the *monitum* placed in the last edition of the *Manuductio*, in which Villemandy points out that his praise of Hobbes and Spinoza (placed respectively among the *restauratores* of philosophy and the followers of Descartes) was based only on the *Renati Cartesii principia philosophiae* and on some of Hobbes' "booklets", and he specifies that his subsequent reading of the other works of these two thinkers had radically altered his judgement: he informs the "pious reader" of this to avoid occasions for "scandal" or "error". Considerations of an apologetic religious nature seem to have induced Villemandy to choose Aristotelianism, Epicureanism, and Cartesianism as his framework of reference for the theoretical sections of the *Manuductio*, and therefore as a criterion of classification for the third and last period of philosophy (see below, para 1.4.4.2.). Indeed this choice does not seem to be motivated so much by the representative and "comprehensive" nature of these three great philosophical movements, as by their "dogmatic" character, since all three – though different from one another in their criteria of true and false – oppose scepticism and affirm the capacity of the human mind to achieve certain knowledge of reality (*Manuductio*, p. 19).

Although he uses terms and concepts of Cartesian origin more than once, Villemandy does not make a choice between these three "dogmatic" philosophies and intends indeed to overcome the sectarian spirit, setting himself on the plane of a rigorously historical narration. After discussed the opinions of the Aristotelians, Epicureans, and Cartesians regarding the true founder of philosophy (which each of these schools naturally identifies as its own founder), he observes that "all these opinions, which we have recalled by taking them from the various sects of philosophers, are vitiated by the spirit of faction, and are not narratives of historical truth (*sunt studia partium, non historicae veritatis narrationes*)". The *restauratio* of philosophy which followed the "obscuring" of the most ancient wisdom was the work of many thinkers and took place over the course of many centuries, and the merit of each one should be recognised (p. 47). This neutral attitude with respect to the sects was later to be defined as a clear choice in favour of eclecticism. At the end of his profile of the history of philosophy Villemandy dwells in fact on the *secta electiva* and declares his adherence to it, concluding with a significant programmatic statement which connects his historical inquiry to the following theoretical discussion of the method of philosophy: "Concerning these causes and others of a similar type we have therefore visited both the ancient and modern sects, in such a way as to

gather from each of them the flowers with which to compose the scented garland of philosophy. This will in general be our method of philosophizing" (p. 77).

1.4.4. *Manuductio ad philosophiae Aristoteleae, Epicureae, et Cartesianae parallelismum*

1.4.4.1. The discussion of the history of philosophy takes up the central part of the *Manuductio* (pp. 43–77 out of a total of 94 pages) and includes 5 of the 15 chapters or sections into which the little work is divided (I: *Origo, progressus, adultaque philosophiae aetas*, pp. 43–53; II: *Variae omnibus seculis philosophorum sectae*, pp. 53–54; III: *Philosophiae nascentis sectae*, pp. 54–59; IV: *Philosophiae adolescentis sectae*, pp. 59–72; V: *Philosophiae adultae, et ad supremam perfectionem contendentis, sectae*, pp. 72–77). The first of these chapters is a sort of general introduction to the history of philosophy; after a discussion of the origin of philosophy, the subject is divided into three untitled *assertiones*: in the first (pp. 47–50) the course of the history of thought is set out very concisely according to the scheme taken up again in Chapters III–V, in the second (pp. 50–51) the "causes" of philosophizing are examined, and in the third (pp. 51–53) the methods of philosophizing are mentioned according to the historical phases. The second chapter defines the concept of *secta* and acts as an introduction to the following discussion by sect. Chapters III–V do not have internal subdivisions; the capital letters in which the names of the various sects are printed substitutes in practice a division into paragraphs, which is adopted however in the index, whose analytical nature mirrors the didactic goal of the *Manuductio*. The frequent marginal notes are reserved for bibliographical references.

1.4.4.2. As it is already clear from the external description, Villemandy divides the history of philosophy into periods according to a tripartite scheme based on an organic metaphor. Philosophy at its "birth" begins with Cain and his descendents and includes the oriental civilisations and the sect of the Druids; like the sun it moves from the east to the south and then to the west and north (*Manuductio*, p. 58). This is followed by "adolescent" philosophy which is in turn divided into three periods. The first is the "heroic" period from the ancient legislators, who developed alchemy, astrology, natural magic, oratory, and civil prudence and whose *philosophandi ratio* was "most rigorous (*gravissima*) and chiefly established to promote generosity, fortitude, and temperance" (p. 60). The transition of science from the palaces of princes to the schools gave rise to the "fabulous", "poetic", or "mythical" period, in which wisdom can also be called *theologia fabulosa*. The third period is "philosophical" and is characterised by innumerable sects, which could be grouped into three "very general" sects: the "dogmatics" (Peripatetics and Stoics), the "acataleptics" (Arcesilaus and the Academics) and the Sceptics (the Pyrrhonians). This scheme, put forward by Sextus Empiricus and taken up again later by Gassendi (both of whom are quoted by Villemandy), is judged however to be too general, and so Villemandy goes back to the customary division between the two "capital" sects, the Ionic and the Italic. From the former there derives, through Socrates, the Academic,

Peripatetic, Cynic, Stoic, and Cyrenaic sect; from the new Academy there originates the *secta electivorum* with Potamon, while the Peripatetic sect is subdivided into four periods: the first goes from Aristotle to Lycon, the second from Lycon to Andronicus of Rhodes, the third from Andronicus to Alexander of Aphrodisia, who enhanced the fortunes of Peripatetism, "greatly obscured by the brilliance of the prevalent Platonic doctrine"; and the fourth period goes from Alexander to Averroes (p. 64). As for the Italic sect, it gave rise through Pythagoras to the Eleatic, the Epicurean, and the Sceptic sects. Besides Greek thought we find the doctrines of the Chinese, the Jews, the Italics and Romans, the Fathers of the Church, and finally the Arabs.

The "adult" phase of philosophy is characterised by an overcoming of the limits reached by Aristotle, within which ancient philosophy had moved with alternating fortunes. It begins with Averroes and the Arabs and develops with the Scholastics and the more recent philosophers reaching, in Villemandy's epoch, almost the summit of perfection: "After having undergone various mutations over the centuries, at times disappearing, at times reborn, but without ever transgressing the boundaries established by Aristotle, finally towards the middle of the 12th century it was reawoken by Averroes and the other Arabs, and then developed by the Scholastics and the more recent philosophers, to the point where it seems in these times almost to have reached the highest peak. Whatever the case, let us call this last period of philosophy the 'adult age' " (p. 72). "Adult" philosophy – which comes to cover a longer period than that which was commonly defined as modern (*recentior*) philosophy – is divided into four sects: the Aristotelian, the Epicurean, the Cartesian, and the Eclectic or *electiva*, which takes from the others what is best in them. The most singular aspect of this division is the Aristotelian sect, whose context is broadened to include, besides medieval thinkers and the authors of Late Scholasticism, even the anti-Aristotelians of Humanism and the Renaissance. It is subdivided into four phases: the first goes from Averroes to Albert the Great, who is considered the "father" of the Scholastics; the second from Albert to the "first restorers of the sciences in the West" (Lorenzo Valla, Poliziano, Rudolph Agricola, Luis Vives . . .) and is characterised by the rise of numerous scholastic sects (Albertists, Thomists, Scotists, Lullians, nominalists). In this period, observes Villemandy, "theology was so mixed up with philosophy that Aristotle sat together with Christ in the same place and both deliberated with almost equal authority" (p. 73). The third phase covers 150 years, from Valla to the schools of Leuven and Coimbra and Pedro de Fonseca (collaborator in the *Conimbricenses*, known as "the Portuguese Aristotle", who died in 1599), and includes the whole humanistic movement: "Human letters had long been exiled from the Empire of the West, while philosophy and theology lay oppressed not only by barbarities, but also by countless thorns, when at the end of the 14th century [*sic*] there arose Valla, Agricola, Vives [. . .]; after them Johannes Argiropulos, Girolamo Savonarola, Ermolao Barbaro, Marsilius Ficinus, cardinal Bessarion, Erasmus of Rotterdam, Johannes Wessel and many other most erudite men, who not only restored human letters, but also restored philososphy with her native splendour, removing useless things together with barbarities, and prudently separating philosophy from theology" (pp. 73–74). Consequently, the authority of

Aristotle, Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and Ockham was subject to a reappraisal and their philosophy kept alive only in the convents and in some universities; the sophistry of some of the Peripatetics was opposed in particular by Ramus, who initiated a new method of philosophizing and founded the sect of the Ramists, considered an "offshoot" of the Aristotelian sect. The fourth and last phase includes the Peripatetics of the contemporary schools, and their method is characterised by their use of synopses of Aristotle's works and *quaestiones*.

The other three sects of "adult" philosophy have no internal subdivisions: the Epicurean sect includes, besides Gassendi and his followers, the scientists, naturalists, and *chymici* of the seventeenth century, from Galileo to Bérigard, Daniel Sennert, Sébastien Basson, Jean-Chrysostome Magnen, and Casimir of Toulouse; more homogeneous is the Cartesian sect in which, besides the most fervid followers of Descartes, we also find, as we have said, Spinoza; as for the Eclectic sect, it has always existed as an intellectual attitude, as testified to by Pythagoras and Plato, who took their doctrines from various sources. The true founder of this sect is considered according to tradition to be Potamon of Alexandria; the ancient Aristotelians also adhered to it, as did almost all the Fathers of the Church, the most noble of the "restorers" of the sciences, and "innumerable" contemporary philosophers (in the margin is the following list: Pythagoras, Aristotle [*sic*], Cicero, Augustine, Vives, Giulio Cesare Scaligero, Johann Heinrich Alsted [† 1638, author of a methodical compendium of all the sciences], and Vossius). Villemandy stops to define the characteristics of this sect and contrasts the *veri philosophi* (who attempt to know things and their qualities) with the *philodoxi* (whose attention is aimed at the words of this or that philosopher rather than at things themselves), quoting in support of what he says passages from Pereyra and Keckermann: "The aim of the eclectic sect is not a vain ostentation of wisdom, but a stable science of the most worthy things; its principles are not human authority, but the most solid axioms investigated by careful examination; finally its supporters are certainly not pedantic sophists (*umbratici*), but rather the most rigorous and wise men of all the centuries. Since this type of philosophizing is excellent and highly praised, for this reason it is our intention to follow it religiously" (p. 76).

Another tripartite general scheme of an evolutive nature, in which the third period is shorter however, is also applied to an analysis of the causes and the method of philosophizing. Villemandy observes that the "first, the middle, and the late sages" determined respectively the *instaurationem*, the *augmentum*, and the *perfectionem* of philosophy. The method used in the various phases was also different: the first sages philosophized "in a slightly more negligent way", "with no theoretical notion (*nulla arte*), and almost with no shrewdness", without basing themselves on solid principles; the philosophers who followed proceeded more cautiously in their "investigation of things", establishing criteria of truth for sensible knowledge, setting down solid foundations for demonstrative procedures, using definition and division to clarify obscure or multiple and confused things, and deducing unknown from known things by means of reasoning. This method was developed even more "ingeniously" and "cautiously" by more recent thinkers, who based philosophy not only on experience but also on innate ideas ("notiones animi communes, a natura

impressae"); they adopted the experimental method in physics and greatly developed geometry and the processes of analysis and synthesis. It must be noted that in this periodization the third phase does not coincide with "adult" philosophy, but, in accord with contemporary opinion, includes only the *recentiores*, that is to say, the thinkers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; among these, quoted with great emphasis is Francis Bacon, who is not mentioned however in the periodization of "adult" philosophy (pp. 51–53).

1.4.4.3. The history of philosophy contained in the *Manuductio* is characterised overall by the idea of continuity and unbroken progress which reflects the programmatic eclecticism of the author. Villemandy notes on more than one occasion the "debts" that even the greatest philosophers have to earlier thinkers; he stresses, for example, the sources from which Pythagoras, Plato, and the Fathers of the Church took their thought and also applies this criterion to Descartes, linking his doctrines back to a wide range of ancient and modern writers, without however denying Descartes' own personal contribution: "Perhaps he took from other philosophers some small, unformed and unrefined piece of his system: some metaphysical principles, for example, from Plato and Augustine; several physical principles from the ancient Epicureans, from Aristotle and his first interpreters, as well as from the works of Gilbert and Harvey, etc. The ethical principles from the same Epicureans, from Seneca, etc. But many principles he took from himself, and he ordered them in a suitable and new way, to the point where he must worthily be considered the sole, extraordinary (*singularis*) creator of that system" (*Manuductio*, p. 75; in the previous lines Villemandy considers it more likely that Descartes did not directly invent his new method, but learnt it from Bacon). This attitude is linked to a conception of philosophy as a unitary patrimony, progressively enriched without interruption by the various ancient peoples and the various sects. The very opposition between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, which constituted a *topos* in seventeenth-century historical consciousness, is resolved and replaced by an organic and continuous development, incorporating the two epochs into the development of the "Aristotelian sect". We must note however that in the synthesis outlined in *assertio* I of Chapter I, Villemandy establishes a distinct divide between the Scholastics, who *multum obscurarunt* philosophy, and the rebirth which had taken place in the previous two centuries (pp. 49–50). The brief outline of the history of thought with which the *Scepticismus debellatus* opens also contains the usual theory of the corruption of Christian doctrine by the Scholastics and the renewal brought by Humanism and the Reformation, which, by restoring the arts and the sciences, led the human race out of the "shadows of scepticism and ignorance" (*Scepticismus debellatus*, p. 3).

It is in this fundamental perspective that we must view Villemandy's use of the traditional theme of the most ancient wisdom (*sapientia primaeva*), whose *restauratio* after original sin was brought about by a long series of thinkers. Adam and his descendants, the Chaldeans, the Magi, the Gymnosophists, etc, are without doubt to be considered the *primi philosophi ac sapientes*, even if from the creation of the world up to the time of Abraham no written documents have survived and almost nothing can be said of the method and the principles of these most ancient

philosophers (*Manuductio*, pp. 43–44 and 54). The links between philosophy at its "birth" and Greek philosophy are dealt with in particular when talking of Pythagoras (who was influenced by the ancient Egyptians and the Hebrews, the Persians, the Indians, and the Druids) and Plato, who was taught *in rebus divinis* by the Egyptians and the Phoenicians. Villemandy does not accept, however, that Pythagoras had been in contact with the prophet Jeremiah or had known the "books of the Jews", whose language was completely unknown to him. As for Jewish "philosophy", the Sadducees and the Pharisees are compared respectively, because of the affinity of their doctrines, to the Epicureans and the Stoics; the latter, following Justus Lipsius, are judged to be nearer to Christianity. The writer who is granted most space (a page and a half) is Epicurus: Villemandy mentions the "envy" and the false accusations he was subjected to and specifies that *voluptas* is to be identified with *animi tranquillitas* and not the pleasure of the senses, quoting passages from the Letter to Menecaeus, Cicero, and Seneca (pp. 63, 65–68, 70). From what has been said so far it is clear that in the debate on the ancients and the moderns, Villemandy affirms the superiority of the latter, even if his eclecticism makes him adopt a very moderate tone which does not admit any radical disjunction between the past and the present. We must not forget however that for Villemandy the recent progress of philosophy was a sign of continuity with the trend initiated by Aristotle, and not against him. He attributes the great development of philosophy in the last few centuries, besides to a refinement in method, to the establishment of scientific academies (*eruditorum societates*), the major ones of which are listed together with their most famous exponents (p. 50).

1.4.4.4. Villemandy follows the method of historiography by sect, which is systematically applied to the entire development of thought; he makes some theoretical observations regarding this method in Chapter II in which he defines the concept of *secta seu disciplina* and identifies the multiplicity of the sects with the multiplicity of the methods of philosophizing. There are various criteria for classifying the sects: according to places and peoples, according to their founders, or according to their doctrines. Villemandy states that he follows the criterion of division into periods given that he had previously mentioned the three ages of philosophy (*Manuductio*, p. 54). The treatment of each sect includes its founder (*author*), place (only in the case of pre-Greek philosophy), followers (*propagators* or *sectatores*), essential principles (*dogmata*), method (*ratio*), and in some case the aim which it attributes to philosophy. The predominant desire to classify the writers does not leave any room for their biographical profile (except in the case of Pythagoras) or for their individual doctrines, and often no information at all is given regarding an author, as in the case of Socrates and Aristotle (an exception is Epicurus' ethics, as we have seen). The narration is consequently impoverished, though this is compensated for in the *Manuductio* as a whole by the theoretical sections in which there is a continual reference to the doctrinal contents of Aristotelianism, Epicureanism, and Cartesianism. In the marginal notes, Villemandy quotes numerous sources, both ancient and modern: the latter include L. Vives, J. Lipsius, Gassendi, Bacon,

Descartes, Hobbes, the histories of philosophy by Vossius and Hornius, and many minor seventeenth-century writers.

1.4.5. The work of a professional philosopher, written for university teaching, the *Manuductio* caused a few ripples in the cultural world of its time: it was reviewed in the *Acta eruditorum* and the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, where Bayle praised his co-religionary: "It shows erudition, judgement, clarity, and elegance everywhere, and above all dexterity in reconciling the different sentiments and banishing the less necessary questions" (NRL, 1685, p. 399). Although it was published several times, the *Manuductio* was not taken into consideration by Heumann and is not quoted by Brucker in his review of works on the history of philosophy. It represents however one of the first cases of a discussion of the theory and the history of philosophy inspired by a programmatic and not merely a latent eclecticism, an approach that was to be greatly developed in German historiography in the following decades. The little work is characteristic in its atypical periodization with respect to the contemporary schemes, above all concerning the relationship between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. It must be noted however, in this regard, that the reduction to a single line of development of two periods which were usually contrasted with one another seems to derive not so much from a changed historical sensitivity with regard to the Middle Ages and Scholasticism (something a little strange in a Calvinist pastor), as from concerns of a classificatory nature which meant distributing the philosophers of the "adult" age in some way within the three "dogmatic" sects used as a criterion of interpretation. The *secta electiva* is also added to these three, it is true, but its relationship with the three great philosophical schools and its own doctrinal consistency are, apart from a few statements of principle, unclearly defined, in such a way that even its "zone of competency" remains unclear: if on one hand it seems to spread out to include most of the modern thinkers, on the other, the need to guarantee the full continuity of the Aristotelian sect and the difficulty of cataloguing humanist and renaissance thought seem to lead Villemandy to place the latter under the exclusive wing of Aristotelianism.

1.4.6. On Villemandy's life and works: *Éloge historique de Mr. Chouet*, BI, XII (1731), pp. 108–112; Haag, *La France protestante*, IX, pp. 506–507; J. Prost, *La philosophie à l'Académie protestante de Saumur (1606–1685)* (Paris, 1907); Labrousse, I, p. 57n; II, pp. 43n, 144n, 212n; M. Heyd, *Between Orthodoxy and the Enlightenment. Jean-Robert Chouet and the Introduction of the Cartesian Science in the Academy of Geneva* (The Hague, 1982); Paganini, *Scepsi moderna*, pp. 151–152; L. Floridi, "*Cupiditas vere videndi*. Pierre de Villemandy's Dogmatic vs. Cicero's Sceptical Interpretation of Mans's Desire to Know", *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, III (1995), pp. 29–56; C. Borghero, "Scepticism and analysis. Villemandy as a critic of Descartes", in *The Return of Scepticism*, pp. 213–229; M. Sina, *La corrispondenza di Jean-Robert Chouet professore di filosofia a Saumur e a Ginevra* (Florence, 2008).

On his fortune: AE, Suppl. I, pp. 432–436; NRL, Oct., 1685, art. IX, in Bayle, *Oeuvres diverses*, I, p. 399; Braun, p. 373 (where the *Manuductio* is quoted).

1.5 Louis Thomassin (1619–1695)

Histoire de la naissance et du progrès de la philosophie

1.5.1. Born in Aix-en-Provence in 1619, Louis Thomassin entered the Oratory at the age of thrirteen and, once he had finished his studies, taught Letters and Philosophy in the colleges of the Congregation. In 1648 he was appointed professor of theology at Saumur, in the most famous of the Oratory's schools, opposing the city's Protestant academy, and he distinguished himself for his lessons and the conferences he held outside the Oratory, inspired by the doctrines of the Fathers and in particular St. Augustine. In 1653 he was called on to teach positive theology in the Paris seminary of Saint-Magloire. In this period he was close to the ideas of Port-Royal and the Jansenists considered him one of their own, but as from 1657 he renounced Jansenism and assumed positions on doctrine opposed to theirs; for their part the Jansenists accused him of teaching a semi-Pelagian Augustinism. Among those with whom Thomassin was in contact in Paris were Huet, Du Hamel, and president Lamoignon, whose famous *Académie* he may have frequented (see above, 1.3.1.). The hostility of his new Oratory superior (Sainte-Marthe, a fervid Augustinian) forced him to leave Saint-Magloire in 1672 and move to the *Maison d'Institution* in rue Saint-Michel, where he devoted himself entirely to his studies. In 1680 he was offered the post of Papal assistant librarian, but his move to Rome was blocked by Louis XIV. In 1690 he returned to Saint-Magloire, where he died in 1695.

1.5.2. With his vast training in literary and religious subjects, Thomassin began his production with the *Dissertationes, commentarii, notae in concilia tum generalia tum particularia* (Paris, 1667), a work which was quickly removed from circulation on the orders of his superiors because of the negative reactions it caused both with the Jansensists (whose distinction between *de facto* and *de iure* the author condemned) and in the court, because of a number of theories against the Gallican tradition. The work was followed by the *Mémoires sur la Grâce* (Leuven, 1668), which attempted to reconcile the opinions of the Fathers with those of Aquinas and the more recent theologians. In the field of the history of Canon Law we have the *Ancienne et nouvelle discipline de l'Eglise, touchant les bénéfices et les bénéficiers,* [. . .] *divisées en quatre parties selon les quatre divers âges de l'Église terminés à Clovis, à Charlemagne, à Hugues Capet, et à nostre siècle* (Paris, 1678–1681: the work, translated into Latin, was reprinted several times up until 1864–1867 and was condensed into an *abrégé*). Thomassin returned to theology with the *Dogmatum theologicorum libri tres* (Paris, 1680), it too reprinted up until the nineteenth century. Some themes in particular (fasting, religious feasts, usury . . .) were dealt with in a series of eight *Traités historiques et dogmatiques sur divers points de la discipline de l'Église et de la morale chrétienne* (Paris, 1680–1700), the last of which is a defence of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the re-affirmation of the Church's right to obtain the conversion of heretics with the aid of secular rulers.

In this context four works on the method of studying and teaching classical culture in harmony with the Christian faith occupy a place apart, written at the request of Thomassin's superiors to satisfy the need, particularly felt among educators of

the seventeenth century, to render the profane sciences "holy".[16] The series opens with *La méthode d'étudier et d'enseigner chrétiennement et solidement les lettres humaines par rapport aux lettres divines et aux Écritures, divisées en six parties, dont les trois premières regardent l'étude des poètes, et les trois suivantes celle des historiens, des philosophes et des grammairiens* (Paris: chez F. Muguet, 1681–1682, 3 vols, 8°). In reality this work only includes the first three of the six sections announced in the title and the other three were published separately. In the *Préface* Thomassin explains the relationship between Christianity and the classical poets, who "were the first philosophers and the first theologians of the pagans, the first to deal with religion and morality, the first to speak and write of God and the angels, the creation and the end of the world [. . .] Therefore it should not surprise us if Christian theology is called on to aid discussion and censure of the theology and the morality of the pagans, as contained in the poets. In fact," and here Thomassin touches on a fundamental theme which also inspires the other three works on "method", "we must agree that this theology of the poets has mixed an infinite number of errors with the truths that natural light had revealed to them, or that the tradition which originally emanated from the ancient Patriarchs, from Noah and Moses, had preserved for them [. . .] or that their reception of the Scriptures and conversation with the Hebrews had taught them. Now, it is this mixture of errors and truths with requires a Christian theologian to scrutinise and separate the precious from the worthless, according to the words of Scripture" (*La Méthode d'étudier les lettres humaines*, fols eij^{v}–eiij^{r}).

The other three "pedagogical" works appeared one shortly after another in the years that followed. The first is *La méthode d'étudier et d'enseigner chrétiennement et solidement la philosophie par rapport à la religion chrétienne et aux Écritures* (Paris: Muguet, 1685, 8°, VIII–754 pp.; 2nd ed., Paris: chez L. Roulland le fils, 1693, VIII–754 pp.). The work contains, in book I, a history of ancient philosophy entitled *Histoire de la naissance et du progrès de la philosophie*; book II is devoted to "metaphysics or theology" and the physics of the ancients (*Les sentimens des philosophes sur la nature de Dieu, des anges, de l'âme et du monde corporel*); the third and final book treats political and moral doctrines (*La politique et la morale des philosophes, avec le reste des moralitez qu'ils ont tiré des autres parties de la philosophie*). The second work is *La méthode d' étudier et d'enseigner chrétiennement et utilement la grammaire ou les langues par rapport à l'Écriture sainte en les réduisant toutes à l'Hébreu* (Paris: Muguet, 1690, 1693^{2}, 2 vols, 8°), where all languages are made to depend on Hebrew since this is the language of

[16]Cf. B. Lamy, *Entretiens sur les sciences* (Paris, 1966 [1st ed. 1684]), p. 154: "Je crois que la fin qu'un homme de bien, et surtout un ecclésiastique, doit se proposer dans l'étude des belles lettres après la gloire de Dieu et la charité du prochain, est de s'instruire de tout ce qui peut être utile à la Religion et aux Sciences Chrétiennes, dont vous avez vu [. . .] que quelques unes supposent la connoissance de plusieurs choses ou prophanes ou indifférentes; mais que l'usage doit rendre saintes". Besides the works of Thomassin – an Oratorian like Lamy – the note commenting on this passage (p. 398, note 9) also quotes the *De la manière d'enseigner chrétiennement* by Pierre Nicole.

Adam; this theme is taken up again in the *Glossarium universale Hebraïcum, quo ad Hebraïcae linguae fontes linguae et dialecti pene omnes revocantur* (Paris, 1697). The third work is entitled *La méthode d'étudier* [. . .] *les historiens prophanes, par rapport à la religion chrétienne et aux Écritures* (Paris: Muguet, 1692, 2 vols, 8°). Besides these edited works there are numerous unedited writings, among which the *Dissertations sur l'histoire ecclésiastique ou éclaircissemens sur les points les plus considérables et les plus contestez qui s'y rencontrent*, dated 1669–1670 and preserved in Bibliothèque Mazarine, ms. 1624. Clair has published two "discours" from this collection which are particularly interesting from the point of view of the history of philosophy and historical methodology: *Différence entre la science et l'histoire tirée de la même étymologie* and *De la matière de la chronologie divisée en deux parties selon les deux parties de son objet et les trois genres de principe* (Clair, *Louis Thomassin (1619–1695).* pp. 123–131 and 132–145).

1.5.3. Thomassin does not subject the history of philosophy to any specific theorizing, but the place and the meaning of the discipline clearly emerge from his philosophical position and his concept of history. Thomassin's speculative orientation is characterised by the confluence of the new doctrines of Descartes and Malebranche on a Platonic and Augustinian background. "He was interested", writes one of Thomassin's biographers, referring to the period in which he taught philosophy in Pézans (1644–1646), "in Plato above all, whom he rightly held should serve as an introduction to the theology of the Fathers and, although he had a profound knowledge of the systems of Descartes and Gassendi, he wished to adopt only those opinions of these new philosophers which seemed to him to be in harmony with the sentiments of the best ecclesiastical authors, in particular St. Augustine" (Nicéron, III, p. 164). Thomassin's thought is not based on a well-defined school and is characterised if anything by a profound religious inspiration, to such an extent that Van Camp qualified it as a "Christian philosophy". For his part Molien observes that in the *Méthode d'étudier et d'enseigner la philosophie* Thomassin "demonstrates a rare erudition which he places at the service of a greater, benevolent eclecticism" (DThC, XV, col. 821). More than eclecticism, however, it would seem better to speak of syncretism and concordism, given that Thomassin's perspective is very close to the theory of *philosophia perennis* elaborated by Agostino Steuco (cf. *Models*, I, pp. 19–22). Thomassin's conception of philosophy and entire human knowledge is based in fact on a fundamental idea taken directly from Augustine: there is no distinction between "wisdom" and "philosophy", between rational investigation and reflection on a revealed fact; there is only one wisdom or philosophy, which is the reflection of the eternal Wisdom of God and which is found at the bottom of every soul, despite the different philosophical sects.

"It cannot be repeated enough that God has hidden in the secret folds of the rational soul the principles of all the beautiful and important truths, like a secret treasure of wisdom. The dissipated and fickle spirit of man, which never enters into itself, never digs down into this treasure, and would be unaware of the sciences kept buried within itself, were it not for the fact that, insisting and making every effort to clarify a parable or an enigma in which these very truths are hidden intentionally [in

the lines above Thomassin had paused to look at the proverbs of Solomon, in which wisdom is hidden in the form of 'parables and enigmas'], he re-awakens these fires and re-kindles the sparks which he carried within him, and he finds within himself the explanation of that which is kept hidden from him without. This is the reason why a veil has been cast over the things that we wished to understand, since we can only understand them properly when we see them in this light that burns within us. And this is why there are so many philosophies in the world, as there are many veils cast over the face of wisdom: and [there is] only one wisdom which results from this when we investigate things in depth, because we find everywhere roughly the same opinions on God, the angels, our souls, the world, blessed or damned immortality, good customs, and political wisdom; because we find that which the souls formed by the hand of God have clearly distinguished within themselves when they re-entered themselves, and that which the different sects of philosophers have derived mediated or directly from our divine Scriptures. [. . .] Thus we will recognise with joy", observes Thomassin a little later, criticising the attribute "barbarian" which the Greeks gave to other peoples, "that if men are barbarians to one another, they are never so because of wisdom or philosophy. They are never strangers to it, it can never be a stranger to them. It resides in their spirits and in their heart, in their intelligence and in their primitive inclinations. [. . .] Therefore wherever there have been men, there may have been wise men. It was neither books nor schools which started to spread wisdom on the earth; it was Wisdom which preceded all books and all schools, and which gave birth to them" (*La méthode d'étudier la philosophie*, pp. 137–38 and 142).

In this unitary vision centred around divine wisdom, "philosophy" expands to include every human manifestation, even eliminating the division then customary between theoretical activity and manual labour. After having described the origin of the sciences and mechanical arts in the age from Adam to Noah, Thomassin concludes with the following considerations: "We have already noted more than once, when dealing with the reading of the poets, that the arts which work externally on sensible matter were regulated by invisible, intelligible, and eternal lights and rules of justness and proportion, harmony and unity, which the artisan stared at with the eyes of his mind while his hands worked on the matter. Now, all these rules of proportion, harmony, and unity, as they are always the same and are always present to all the minds in all the world and during the course of all the centuries, cannot subsist if not in the divine Word and in eternal Wisdom as their original source. It is for this reason that we can number the wise men and artisans among the sages and the philosophers, if they raise their spirits up to that divine light which continually illuminates them from the highest of the heavens" (p. 28). Eternal wisdom historically revealed itself to Adam and the Jewish people, from where it spread among the various nations of the world in the form of so many streams (p. 87). It follows from this that the history of philosophy has the task of identifying the links that exist between the ancient doctrines and divine wisdom, doctrines which are drawn from it directly thanks to "natural light" or indirectly through the mediation of the Jews and the peoples close to them: this is the "Christian reading" of the philosophies which preceded the advent of Christianity, and this is the objective of Thomassin's wide-ranging preparation.

This perspective, in which the history of philosophy becomes interwoven with the history of revelation, is further clarified in its theoretical premises in one of the *Dissertations sur l'histoire ecclésiastique*: starting from the Platonic etymology of ἱστορία (*Cratylus*, 437b), Thomassin points out that the difference between science and history "consists of this, that even if the sciences were completely deleted from our minds and neither the books nor the tools the ancients were left for us, we could still re-acquire them with hard work and the effort of the human mind, by associating the ones with the others and by examining the world which would [still] remain for us; but if we lost history it would be totally impossible to recover it: we would regret this totally irredeemable loss". After this appraisal of history, which is quite different from the attitude to the past assumed by Malebranche, Thomassin analyses the relationship between science and history in Augustine, dwelling on Augustine's criticism of the "curiosity which leads us to learn the stories which are outside us, while we neglect interior knowledge". This reproach points out "that the study of history in general is dangerous because it distracts and draws the soul back from the application which it must have within itself, by occupying it outside itself; but we must bear in mind that this only happens when it is accompanied by this badly-regulated curiosity [. . .]. There is another study regulated by history, which he [Augustine] is far from criticising, since he himself recommends it in a thousand places, and it is that which, instead of this spirit of pure curiosity, is animated by a serious intention to derive profit from it". In reality Augustine "has not neglected history, dealing with it not only according to the letter and the skin which appears from the outside, but principally according to the spirit and the mysteries which it holds within it". He has shown us that sacred and ecclesiastical history "contain the image of all the ages and internal and spiritual states of the soul, in such a way that everything that is carried out in secret and as a summary (*en abrégé*) within every man in particular is represented with evidence and in great volume of the general history of the human race and the universal man which lasts from the beginning of the world up until the end [. . .] after which we can no longer doubt, I hope, that history, far from distracting the soul from a knowledge of itself, faithfully represents it to itself and places it like a great mirror in front of our eyes, where it can examine itself with greater ease and pleasure than within itself" (*Différence entre la science et l'histoire*, pp. 123–124, 127–129).

1.5.4. *Histoire de la naissance et du progrès de la philosophie*

1.5.4.1. The history of philosophy contained in book I of *La méthode d'étudier la philosophie* is divided into 23 chapters (pp. 2–276), subdivided into paragraphs. At the beginning of the work there is a very brief presentation which is followed by the *Table des chapitres*; a summary index of paragraphs is placed at the beginning of each chapter. In the margins there are bibliographical references.

1.5.4.2. Thomassin does not specifically mention a scheme of periodization, but in the distribution of chapters (after the initial chapter on "Definitions and divisions of wisdom and philosophy") there emerge three groupings of a chronological and geographical nature. The first concerns the thought of the Jews, whose *progrès* is charted in Chapters II–VII (II: from Adam to Noah; III: from after the

Flood to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph; IV: Job and Moses; V: from Moses to Solomon; VI: Solomon; VII: from Solomon to the end of the Jewish reign). The second grouping includes the "philosophy" of the ancient Greek poets, the peoples of the East, and the "barbarian nations" (Chapters VIII–XIII). The third grouping embraces Greek thought divided into sects (Chapters XIV–XXI) and Roman philosophy (Chapter XXII); its chronological span goes beyond Antiquity since the chapter on Aristotle (XVII) also examines his medieval fortune. Roman philosophy is subjected to an internal periodization: the most ancient period from the origins with Numa Pompilius is followed by the extinction of philosophy and then its revival, despite opposition from Cato the Elder, until it achieves a "triumph" during the Imperial Age. The twenty-third and last chapter is of a speculative nature ("On the application that everyone must have to philosophy or wisdom, and also the other arts and sciences, but in relation to the wisdom or the philosophy which is its first origin and its final end").

1.5.4.3. The historiographical theories present in the *Histoire* are mostly a coherent application of the speculative principles which inspire Thomassin. Philosophy is made to start with Adam, since "the first follower of such an excellent master had to be versed in every sort of noble knowledge". We can deduce from the fact that God ordered Adam to impose names on the animals that the first man had a perfect knowledge of nature, which was entrusted to his rule. But, even assuming that Adam did not have a profound knowledge of sensible things, he could not have be devoid of the "science and penetration of intellectual things and divine truths" because his spirit had not yet been "obscured by any stain". If after original sin Adam "lost the title of sage, he was not slow to merit that of philosopher [. . .] he did not cease to preserve the patrimony of such great and illustrious knowledge as God had entrusted to him for him and all his posterity. His revolt [. . .] brought greater malice into his will than shadows into his ability to understand" (*La méthode*, pp. 16–22). The entire historical development of ancient thought is made to derive directly or indirectly back to Noah and his sons: from them indeed derived the wisdom of the Chaldeans and the Assyrians, which then spread eastwards (Brachmans and Gymnosophists) and westwards (Jews, Phoenicians, ancient Egyptians, and then Greeks). These latter took their wisdom from the oriental peoples: Thales and Zeno the Stoic were of Phoenician origin, Pherecydes came from Syros, while Democritus, Pythagoras, Plato, and Pyrrho travelled to eastern lands; basing himself on Clement of Alexandria, Thomassin affirms that the ancient Greek poets and the philosophers which followed them (such as Heraclitus, Plato, and Aristotle) imitated Moses and the prophets, "veiling the most beautiful knowledge in enigmas, fictions, parables, and figures", whose secret could only be grasped by the most intelligent (pp. 94–95, 106–108, 120, 136, 166 . . .).

In harmony with his concept of "wisdom or philosophy" Thomassin does not note any fundamental difference between Greek and Jewish thought: the prophets of the Old Testament correspond to the pagan sages or philosophers. The Greeks in fact reached a lower level of wisdom than the Jews, "since Greek philosophy has never given precepts so perfect in wisdom without Abraham having anticipated

and surpassed them with the examples of virtue he provided; and the imaginary sage of Greece has remained far below the true sage of our Scriptures. The sages of the Scriptures are therefore effective sages, those of pagan philosophy are merely sages in idea, and this same idea is often rather defective. Seth, Enoch, Sem, and Abraham were perfect models of wisdom . . .". This general judgement is applied to the comparison between Moses and Plato: the latter is called the "Greek Moses, because he conceived of the idea of a republic in some way divine, just like Moses. But there are two differences. [. . .] The first is that Plato merely gave an idea of his divine republic or theocracy, and he could only show it on paper; Moses on the other hand happily carried out this great plan and formed a new State, all religious and philosophical. The second difference is that Plato only worked effectively to train a small number of sages in his school who were able to govern his republic, if it should ever come into existence; Moses instead communicated wisdom to an innumerable multitude of peoples, and made as many sages as there were subjects in his divine State" (pp. 31–32, 50, 61). As for the so-called "barbarian" nations, Thomassin points out that no people deserves this title, as would appear from the passage quoted in 1.5.3. At the end of Chapter XIII, devoted to "barbarian philosophies" he quotes *De civitate Dei*, VIII, IX, where Augustine "teaches that the true happiness of man consists of wisdom and virtue, regulated by a knowledge of the true God and His holy laws; that numerous philosophers have seen this truth and that in whatever part of the world they lives, both in Greece and among the barbarians, they had many points of agreement with the Christian religion" (p. 157).

The *conformité* or *convenance* with holy Scripture constitutes a historiographical category in its own right, which Thomassin applies continually in his interpretation of Greek thought. In the case of Zeno, born in a colony of Phoenicians, close to the Jews, and a follower of the followers of Plato and Socrates, "we can well believe that [. . .] he took from them some sparks of the truths of Christianity. From there come the seeds of truth, the natural knowledge [. . .] which these philosophers called *comprehensiones*, *communes rationes*, [. . .] which are like the rest of the wisdom of earthly paradise, which sin has made us lose, and the principles by which with great study and work we can return there". Even the Cynics, despite their reprehensible behaviour, are brought close to Christianity for the "amazing conformity" of their moral precepts with the teaching of the Gospel (pp. 116, 212, 218–219). In its turn "the sect of the Epicureans is still one of those in which it appears that, despite the corruption of the human heart, [. . .] the force of the truth that shines in the eyes of the soul and the instinct of nature prevail in the end, and make admirable lights and virtues shine". Like the Cynics (but from different perspectives) the Epicureans made the mistake of confusing man's present state, conditioned by original sin, with that of the innocence in which Adam found himself before the fall. Thomassin stops to analyse the Epicurean concept of *voluptas*, objecting that we must love the virtues in themselves. As for Epicurus' physical doctrines, which had provoked much discussion in the seventeenth century, he limits himself to declaring that Epicurus "was crude and ignorant in mathematics", quoting as an example the theory that (on the basis of sensistic premises) the stars cannot be any bigger than they appear to us (pp. 227–238).

Neither are the Cyrenaics subject to a total condemnation, since Thomassin deduces from several anecdotes that "some sparks of wisdom" remained in that sect too. Moving on to the Sceptics, he observes that, despite the attempts made by some to distinguish between Pyrrhonians, Megarians, and new Academics, in reality the difference is "very little and very difficult to see". The greatest problem with scepticism, according to Thomassin, consists of their having exasperated and pushed to excess the limits proper to human knowledge, regarding the study of nature in particular. He therefore rejects a generalisation of scepticism, distinguishing "between the Sceptics, always hesitating in everything, and the great men of Antiquity who they tried in vain to hide behind: Homer, Plato, Socrates, Zeno, Democritus, and some others. In fact if they have sometimes said that the truth was hidden by impenetrable shadows and that they knew nothing but the fact that they knew nothing, all this only regarded questions of physics, which were debated on one side and the other in the schools with more heat than light, more exercise than success, since this great universe always remains virtually unknown to us. But they never thought to cast doubt on the truths of numbers and geometry and the first principles of morality, on which the entire human race is in agreement" (pp. 242–245; Thomassin's approach here is diametrically opposite to that of Huet: see below, Chapter 2, para 2.4.2).

The philosophy in greatest harmony with Christianity is naturally that of Plato, "who rose to the most divine truths, which the Gospel later spread to the entire human race". Most of book II of the *Méthode d'étudier la philosophie* is also devoted to Plato's thought; Chapter VI in particular examines the presence of the mystery of the Trinity in Moses, Plato, Plotinus, and Porphyry, and "the insensible progress of philosophy in this august mystery, which follows that of the Old and New Testament" is outlined (pp. 334–354). In line with his syncretistic orientation, Thomassin takes up Cicero and Augustine's observations on the "concord" between Platonists, Peripatetics, and Stoics: "It is a lesson which these great men, St. Augustine, and Cicero teach us, to attempt all the ways to concord between the ancients in their interpretation. [. . .] Indeed peace and concord will never ceased to subsist, even if there remain some small differences, similar to those which make a man or a doctor not always in agreement with himself, sometimes changing something in his opinions; and prevent all men from ceasing to resemble one another and being of the same nature, as there is a great difference in characteristics and manners between one and another". In support of the theory that "Platonists and Aristotelians differed almost only in words" Thomassin points out that "Aristotle combat Plato's ideas, but recognised that God's supreme intelligence made and governed every thing, according to eternal designs, which fundamentally means recognising the ideas". In an analogous way a point of agreement between Plato and the Stoics is identified in their concept of the soul of the world, which "does not consist of making God corporeal, no longer in the soul, but of adding a body to him on which the thought and the will, the intelligence and the rule of God and the soul arise with an absolute pre-eminence" (pp. 188–189).

The comparison between Plato and Aristotle is taken up again in the chapter devoted to the latter (XVII): Aristotle "was excellent in method and in logic; he gave

way to Plato in metaphysics and theology, but surpassed him in physics, above all in his history of animals. [. . .] He gave everything to reasoning, with no concern for tradition, to which Plato had been so deferent. Thus his philosophy has none of the great splendour or the great loftiness of that of Plato and Pythagoras, who had largely profited by the orientals and the tradition of the Jews, perhaps even by our Scriptures. [. . .] Plato had learnt this from them [the Jews], rather than from his own reasoning. Aristotle on the other hand never travelled to the East, neglected the traditions that came from it and deprived himself of the most beautiful light of philosophy, which is to know the Person of eternal Wisdom Himself". The difference between Moses and Plato on one hand, and Aristotle on the other is developed in the following pages, but with this Thomassin does not intend to deny all "conformity" between Aristotle and holy Scripture: "I know perfectly well", he admits, "that this is what we least expect. Indeed it is for this that we must not neglect such an important point. St. Clement of Alexandria assures us that the Stoics and Aristotle borrowed much from Plato. We can hardly doubt after this, that they did not also take some conformity with our theology. [. . .] It would be very unlikely that such a great genius [Aristotle] studied for twenty years under another incomparable genius without having derived and preserved great enlightenment from it" [there follows a reference to Cicero's theory of the substantial agreement between the two schools] (pp. 195–206).

The importance that the category of "conformity to Scripture" has in the interpretation of Greek thought is significantly confirmed by the care taken by Thomassin to eliminate the "anomalies" which do not agree with the general picture. More than Aristotle, the major anomaly is represented by the Ionian philosophers, who turned their attention to physical inquiry and the search for second causes, neglecting all reference to the first cause, on which the ancient poets and "all the sages of the fabulous centuries" had instead dwelt. This fact seems to damage the idea of a progressive affirmation of philosophy founded on the "eternal and immutable law of wisdom and justice" which prescribes following God first of all: "I do not know", Thomassin comments regarding the orientation of Thales and other Ionians, "if we must say that philosophy always progressed towards its clarification and explanation". The incongruency is resolved with the conjecture that "these first Ionian philosophers, who took for granted what was incontestable and up until then uncontested regarding the first efficient cause of all things, spoke only of second causes which up until then had been unknown and had never even been sought. They were afraid that, if they had made particular effects derive back to God, they would have fallen into the previous custom of neglecting the search for all the second causes and would have merely satisfied themselves with the first". It is for this reason that Thales never spoke either of metaphysics or morals, even though they must have been well-known to him as they constituted the inheritance of the most ancient philosophers. "But", Thomassin goes on, "when they realised that knowledge of second causes was uncertain and there was the danger that it would make them forget the science of God, the angels, and customs, which was the most constant, the most useful, and most necessary science, Anaxagoras, Socrates, and Plato gave theology and morality back their lustre and their ancient reputation". The praise of

Socrates (taken from *De civ. Dei*, VIII, III) must be placed in this context, praise for having brought philosophy back to its natural course (pp. 161–163, 176; on Bayle's criticism of this interpretation see below, Chapter 2, para 2.1.3.5).

Thomassin's depreciation of Greek philosophy, which is made to derive from the East (in particular from the Phoenicians and the Egyptians), also operates from another historical and geographical standpoint, namely west of Greece, in Italy. Indeed not only was "the Italic philosophy of Pythagoras" more ancient than that of the Greeks, but the philosophy that Numa Pompilius established in Rome was even more ancient than that of Pythagoras. Thomassin takes from Plutarch the information that allows him to reconstruct the "philosophy" of Numa Pompilius, which was characterised among other things by the prohibition against "making any image of the divinity, wishing men to be strongly persuaded that the first principle of all beings was incorporeal and incorruptible, like a pure intelligence" . It follows from this that "the philosophy of the Romans was not only more ancient but also more enlightened than that of the Greeks, on the most essential point, which is the belief in and the cult of the divinity [the cult refers to the building of the round temple to Vesta]". The study of philosophy subsequently declined in Rome; it was re-born when Roman youth took an interest in Greek letters and reached the highest peaks of achievement, in particular with Laelius, "whom Cicero placed above all the sages of Greece", and Cicero's own *Hortensius*, "which St. Augustine judged to be highly suitable to raise us up to a love of eternal wisdom" (pp. 252–261). Thomassin ends his historical discussion by affirming the superiority of Roman over Greek philosophy. He quotes in his support a passage from the *Tusculan disputations*, but also provides an explanation of a more general nature, from which there emerges the idea of a progress which can be explained both by divine providence and the work of man: "We might believe that a natural love for his fatherland prevailed in Cicero, were it not certain on the other hand that the arts and the sciences have their birth, their progress, and their decline in every nation, and that if a nation receives them ardently from another which begins to feel disgust for them, it is impossible for it not to add some new degree of perfection. Greek philosophy sensed its old age by then, precisely when the Romans began to enjoy it: it therefore took on a new vigour with the Romans, which was like a second childhood. Plato, and with him all of Greece, was persuaded of the same superiority with regard to the knowledge that had come to them from the Barbarians, that is from the Orientals. He claimed that the Greeks had received nothing from them that they had not perfected, adding to it new beauty. 'In truth, whatever the Greeks received from the Barbarians, they gave back better' (in *Epinomides*). This was perhaps neither a proof nor an effect of the superiority of the Greek mind over that of the Barbarians, but depended on the natural course of human affairs, which seem to follow the course of the stars and move always from the east to the west, as the human race itself did, thanks to the providence of He who created and governs the heaven and the earth. Or it is an effect of the natural progress of men and all that comes from them; the course of the years and the succession of the centuries ordinarily adds some new perfection to them" (p. 262).

1.5.4.4. The concept of wisdom as "truth written and hidden at the bottom of the soul" (*La méthode*, p. 140) gives a unitary and continuous perspective to the development of human thought, and, from a methodological point of view, means going beyond the traditional treatment by sects and lives, in which unity is prevalently external. Thomassin leaves out biographical information regarding the founders of the schools, but indicates the succession of the most important followers of each sect. Given the work's approach, in setting out the doctrines he gives space almost exclusively to theological and moral doctrines, which are the object of comparison and discussion; these are only touched on, because the systematic discussion of the principal doctrines of the ancients is reserved for books II and III, of which book I is the historical introduction. Among his sources, Thomassin privileges Cicero, Clement of Alexandria, and Augustine, who are used systematically both for historical notions and, above all, for judgements of a speculative nature. Thomassin shows a direct knowledge of the works of Plato, Aristotle, and Plotinus, who are quoted in the course of the three books of the *Méthode d'étudier la philosophie*. There are few quotations from modern sources, limited to Vives, Vossius, and de Launoy, who is widely used in the account of the "different accidents" which befell the philosophy of Aristotle; Gassendi on the other hand is not mentioned, even though Thomassin dwells on the Epicurean concept of *voluptas*.

1.5.5. The *Méthode d'étudier la philosophie* was given a lengthy review by Bayle in the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*; book I receives the most attention, which it is said "instructs us in many particularities concerning all the types of philosophers, and accompanies the authorities it cites with solid reflections". Bayle dwells in particular on the interpretation of Plato and the theme of the consonance between academic scepticism and Christianity, referring to the controversy which was underway at the time between Simon Foucher and the Cartesian Desgabets. In his analysis of book II of the *Méthode* Bayle praises the account of the "mysterious ladder of the Platonists", which rises from earthly beauties to divine beauty, but also makes interesting corrections regarding the history of philosophy: "I do not think however that Cicero says, as he is attributed as saying here, that this proposition, 'God is' is found among the first principles of human knowledge [. . .] It is to M. Descartes that this excellent thought would better be attributed" (NRL, 1686, pp. 560–561). Bayle also criticises Thomassin's interpretation of Anaxagoras, as we have said, in the *Dictionnaire historique et critique*. Other reviews appeared in the *Journal des sçavans* (which stressed the theme of "eternal Wisdom") and the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*. The *Méthode d'étudier la philosophie* was mentioned by Lamy among the modern examples of a "histoire de la philosophie en général" (see above, Intro.) and was used as a source by Deslandes in his *Histoire critique*. Nicéron on the other hand expressed a generally negative judgement on the four *Méthodes*, following the opinions expressed by Huet and the abbé Lenglet du Fresnoy: "In the history of his life, Mr. Huet maintains that Father Thomassin would have done better if he had limited himself to writing on ecclesiastical discipline, which was his strong point, rather than working on *belles lettres*, of which he had only a smattering" (Nicéron, III, pp. 174–175; cf. also Deslandes, *Histoire critique*, I, p. 193, where Thomassin is

defined as "more of a canonist than a philosopher"). An even harsher condemnation came from the Jesuit Jean Hardouin. In his *Athei detecti*, published posthumously in a collection of uneditied works which was placed on the Index on 13th April, 1739, he collected a series of extracts from the works of a number of seventeenth-century French thinkers, accusing them of leading people towards atheism. Our Thomassin figures in the list of "atheists" (!), together with Jansen, Ambroise Victor (pseudonym of André Martin), Malebranche, Arnauld, Nicole, Pasquier Quesnal, Pascal, Descartes, Antoine Le Grand, and Sylvain Régis. The sylloge of quotations from Thomassin takes up several pages and is taken from his theological work and above all from the *Méthode d'étudier la philosophie* (Hardouin, *Opera varia*, pp. 11–43).

In its structure and intents, the *Méthode d'étudier la philosophie* presents analogies with Rapin's *Réflexions sur la philosophie*. Given the rivalry in those years between the congregation of the Oratory and the Company of Jesus, it seems likely that Thomassin's work also intended in some way to compete with the successful series of Rapin's *Réflexions*. From the point of view of the history of philosophy the comparison between the *Réflexions sur la philosophie en général* and the *Histoire de la naissance et du progrès de la philosophie* is not without interest: the outline traced by the Jesuit covers the entire span of thought but has rather the nature of an *abrégé*, while Thomassin's treatment, limited to ancient thought, is more analytical and extensive. Although both writers are animated by the same preoccupation to place philosophy in relation to religion, they differ in a truly emblematic way in their evaluation of the "philosophicity" of pre-Greek thought and in their fundamental theoretical attitude: Rapin goes back to Aristotle and limits the philosophical importance of Platonism, as well as that of Oriental thought, while Thomassin resolutely joins the Platonic and Augustinian tradition and gives Oriental thought more space than Greek thought. These two opposite positions give rise to different visions of the historical development of philosophy: Rapin rejects the very notion of "development" understood as growth and progress, judging Aristotelianism to be the summit of human thought and assuming therefore a negative attitude towards "modern" philsosophers. Thomassin outlines a sort of "philosophy of the history of philosophy" on Platonic and Augustinian bases, and arrives at a clear affirmation of the concept of the progress and historicity of human thought, in which explanations of a supernatural order (providence) accompany historical and "natural" reasons.

We cannot determine the exact importance of this idea of progress, since Thomassin limits himself to ancient philosophy, which preceded and "prepared" Christianity; nor must we forget that the considerations expressed at the end of book I of the *Méthode d'étudier la philosophie* seem to contrast with the previous statements on the inferiority of the Greek sages, and in particular Plato, with respect to the Jewish sages and Moses. With the caution imposed by these limits, the idea of progress present in Thomassin should be stressed: it is close to the vision of history set out in Bossuet's contemporary *Discours sur l'histoire universelle*, but also lends itself to a stimulating comparison with the notion of progress which, deprived of a supernatural horizon, is found at the basis of the "lay theology of

history" which was to be elaborated by the Enlightenment. In a more restricted context, in part too for their common reference to the themes of *philosophia perennis*, Thomassin's *Histoire* can be compared to the "historia non tantum philosophorum sed et philosophiae" which Leibniz had spoken of several years earlier, and in which the diversity and fragmentary nature of the sects and philosophers finds a unifying factor in the "light of the truths naturally written in our souls" (*La méthode*, p. 140).

1.5.6. On Thomassin's life, works, and thought: Nicéron, III, pp. 163–179 (which includes the *Vie du P. Louis Thomassin* by Joseph Bougerel, published at the beginning of the 1725 ed. of the *Ancienne et nouvelle discipline de l'Église*); BUAM, XLV, pp. 473–477; Bouillier, II, pp. 335–339; H. Brémond, "Le P. Louis Thomassin et la prière pure", in *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France*, vol. VII/2 (Paris, 1928), pp. 374–415; H. Van Camp, "La 'philosophie chrétienne' de L. Thomassin de l'Oratoire", *Revue néo-scolastique de philosophie*, XL (1937), pp. 243 ff.; P. Nordhues, *Der Kirchenbegriff des L. Thomassin in seinen dogmatischen Zusammenhängen und in seiner Lebensmässingen Bedeutung* (Leipzig, 1958); P. Clair, *Louis Thomassin (1619–1695). Étude bio-bibliographique, avec vingt lettres et deux textes inédits* (Paris, 1964); Id., *Introduction à la pensée de L. Thomassin* (Paris, 1973); R. Lachenschmid, *L. Thomassins Inkarnationslehre* (Trier, 1968); F.J. Busch, *Lex Christi secundum naturam. Die christologische-heilsgeschichtliche Einheit und Identität des sittlichen Gesetzes nach Louis de Thomassin* (Rome, 1975); J. Dagen, *L'histoire de l'esprit humain dans la pensée française de Fontenelle à Condorcet* (Paris, 1977), pp. 21–22 and 28–29; D. Bosco, "Rigorismo e perfezione. Appunti sull'etica di L. Thomassin", *Rivista di filosofia neo-scolastica*, LXXX (1988), pp. 22–62.

On his fortune: NRL, 1686, in Bayle, *Oeuvres diverses*, I, pp. 523–524, 552–567 (on book I of the *Méthode pour étudier la philosophie*: pp. 553–560); JS, XIV (1686), pp. 60–62; *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, 1686, Paris, Bibl. Nat., Fr. 24498, cc. 55 and 75 (cf. Clair, *Louis Thomassin*, p. 75); HOS, 1696, pp. 422–460; J. Hardouin, "Athei detecti", in *Opera varia* (Amsterdam and The Hague, 1733), pp. 11–43; Deslandes, *Histoire critique*, I, p. 193.

To contextualise his historiographical theories within the themes of *prisca theologia* and *philosophia perennis*: D.P. Walker, "The *Prisca Theologia* in France", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XVII (1954), pp. 204–259; Id., *The Ancient Theology. Studies in Christian Platonism from XVth to the XVIIIth Century* (London, 1972), pp. 209–214; Ch. B. Schmitt, "Perennial Philosophy: from Agostino Steuco to Leibniz", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXVII (1966), pp. 505–532; Id., "*Prisca theologia* e *Philosophia perennis*: due temi del Rinascimento italiano e la loro fortuna", in *Atti del V Convegno intern. del Centro di studi umanistici* (Florence, 1970), pp. 211–236; Braun, pp. 91–92; E. Berti, "Il concetto rinascimentale di *philosophia perennis* e le origini della storiografia filosofica tedesca", VI (1977), pp. 3–11; W. Schmidt-Biggemann, *"Philosophia perennis". Historical Outlines of Western Spirituality in Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Thought* (Dordrecht, 2004).

1.6 Gilles Ménage (1613–1692)

1.6.4. *Historia mulierum philosopharum*

1.6.1. Famous scholar and man of letters (Bayle called him "the French Varro"), Gilles Ménage was born in Angers in 1613. After his classical and legal studies he began a career in the courts, which he soon abandoned to go to Paris, where he entered the Church and devoted himself entirely to letters, enjoying among other things the protection of Mazarin. He was in contact with the most cultured men of his time, both French and foreign, and he assiduously attended the most fashionable salons, becoming famous not only for his erudition but also for his wit and sharp tongue, which made him numerous enemies. Among these was Molière (who portrayed him as *Vadius*, a character in the *Femmes savants*) and Racine, who firmly opposed his admission to the *Académie française* in 1684. Among his polemics was the famous clash with Adrien Baillet, against whose *Jugemens des sçavans* he wrote his *Anti-Baillet* in 1690. He had a perfect knowledge of Italian and Spanish, and was made a member of the *Accademia della Crusca*. Every Wednesday he held literary meetings in his house, named precisely *mercuriales*. He died in Paris in 1692.

1.6.2. Ménage's literary production concerns literature above all, from humanist poetry to linguistics and literary criticism. He wrote the *Poëmata* (Paris, 1656), which he republished several times; the *Origines de la langue françoise* (Paris, 1650), which later became the *Dictionnaire étymologique* (Paris, 1694 and 1750); the *Origini della lingua italiana* (Paris, 1669 and Geneva, 1685); and the *Observations sur la langue françoise* (Paris, 1673–1676), 2 vols. These works demonstrate his vast knowledge but also his lack of historical accuracy and a tendency to make arbitrary etymologies. He also published critical observations on Tasso's *Aminta* (1655), Malherbe (1666), and the poetry of Giovanni della Casa (1667). A collection of his conversations and his witty sayings appeared posthumously in Paris in 1693 entitled *Menagiana* (complete ed.: Paris, 1715–'29). In the field of the history of philosophy Ménage provided a vast commentary on the new edition of Diogenes Laertius: *De vitis, dogmatis et apophthegmatis eorum qui in philosophiam claruerunt libri X*, Thoma Aldobrandino *interprete, cum annotationibus ejusdem, quibus accesserunt annotationes* Henrici Stephani *et utriusque* Casauboni, *cum uberrimis* Aegidii Menagii *observationibus* (London: impensis O. Pulleyn, 1664), 4 parts in one folio vol. We learn from the *Journal des sçavans* that these *Observationes* had previously been published in Paris (1663) with a small copy run at Ménage's own expense (JS, XX, 1692, p. 546). They were then enlarged to such an extent as to require a new edition of the *De vitis*, which was edited by Meibom and is the best which has so far come out: *De vitis, dogmatibus et apophthegmatibus clarorum philosophorum libri X graece et latine, cum subjunctis integris annotationibus* Is. Casauboni, Th. Aldobrandini & Mer. Casauboni. *Latinam* Ambrosii *versionem complevit et emendavit* Marcus Meibomius, *Seorsum excusas* Aeg. Menagii *in Diogenem observationes auctiores habet volumen II. Ut et ejusdem Syntagma de mulieribus philosophis; et* Joachimi Kühnii *ad Diogenem notas* [. . .]

(Amsterdam: apud Enricum Wetstenium, 1692), 2 vols, 4°, pp. xii-672; vi-590 + unnumbered indices.

This edition, which is longer and more correct than the previous one is organised as follows: after a dedication by the editor to Frederick III of Brandeburg and a note to the reader, vol. I presents a catalogue of the editions of Laertius up until 1663 and an index of the philosophers; it is followed by the text with notes, illustrated by engravings. Vol. II has the following contents: a letter of dedication by Ménage to the erudite collectionist Emery Bigot, dated Paris 20th August 1663; a preface to the commentaries by Ménage himself; a letter from the learned Anglican bishop John Pearson to Ménage; *Observationes et emendationes* by Ménage (pp. 1–484); *Historia mulierum philosopharum* (pp. 485–508); *Observationes* by Joachim Kühn, professor of History and Greek at the University of Strasburg (pp. 509–556); *Variantes lectiones ex duobus codicibus manuscriptis, altero Cantabrigiensi, Arundeliano altero* [...] *Quas nobiscum* [...] *communicavit vir celeberrimus* Tho. Gale (pp. 557–566); *Epistolae et praefationes quae prioribus Diogenis Laertii editionibus praefixae erant* (pp. 567–581); *Platonis vita, ab* Olimpiodoro *graece scripta*, with a Latin translation by Jakob Windet (pp. 582–588); Merici Casauboni *Dissertatio praeliminaris ad decimum librum Laertii* (pp. 589–590). The work ends with four indices: I. *Scriptorum et operum quorum meminit Diog. Laertius* (in Greek); 2. *Veterum et recentiorum scriptorum, in Aeg. Menagii observationibus emendatorum, illustratorum et notatorum* (in Latin); 3. *Vocum graecarum ab interpretibus Diogenis expositarum* (in Greek); 4. *Rerum et verborum notatu dignorum quae apud Diogenem ejusque interpretibus occurrunt* (in Latin).

In this second volume, as we will see, Ménage occupies a predominant place: besides his *Observationes* the *Historia mulierum philosopharum* is also reprinted, a work the equivalent in female terms to Laertius' *Lives*, and which had already been published in 1690 in Lyon (apud Anissonios, J. Posuel et C. Rigaud, 12°, 2 parts in one volume), together with a commentary in Italian on Petrarch's seventh sonnet ("La gola, il sonno et l'otiose piume"). Besides the reprint of the monumental edition of Laertius, the little work was also made into a "pocket" edition aimed evidently at favouring its circulation in those literary salons in which Ménage was one of the most brilliant protagonists (Amsterdam: apud H. Wetstenium, 1692, 16°, 65 pp. + index of names). Ménage's interest in biography is also demonstrated by two manuscript works (*Veterum medicorum historia* and *Vitae meretricum Graecarum*, mentioned in the *Menagiana*).

1.6.3. In his letter to Bigot, Ménage claims that ever since he was young he had been interested in *philosophica historia*, which he also calls *ingeniorum historia*: "Indeed I confess that as from a very early age I have been greatly attracted by every liberal art and doctrine, but above all by the history of philosophy, which I am accustomed to call the history of minds. Twenty years ago or more I prepared in this city [= Paris] a great commentary on Diogenes Laertius, eminent author of the history of philosophy, with the intention of setting out all the sects of the ancient philosophers and illustrating their lives" (Laertius, 1692 ed., II, fol. 2v).

But a serious illness forced him to return to his native city and devoted himself "to more tranquil studies" until he was forced to take up the commentary on Laertius again at the urging of the London editor Octavian Pulleyn. This eminently philological approach to the history of philosophy appears alien to theoretical reflections on the nature and methods of the discipline, so much the more because Ménage, a supporter of the *anciens*, was interested exclusively in the *veteres philosophi* and showed he considered Laertius to be an unsurpassable model. Indeed, as we will see later, his *Historia mulierum philosopharum* is built on the scheme of the *Lives of the philosophers*, even though its chronological limit is moved up to the Middle Ages to include Heloise and Anna Comnena. This little work is dedicated to the famous Mme Dacier, who among other things had published the *Thoughts* of Marcus Aurelius in French and whom Ménage defines as "a great lover of and expert in the history of philosophy". "Nor will men be surprised", Ménage tells Dacier in the brief preface to the *Historia mulierum philosopharum*, "that I have dedicated the Lives of the Women Philosophers to you, since Diogenes Laertius dedicated the Lives of the Philosophers to a woman" (*Historia mulierum*, in Laertius, 1692 ed., II, pp. 487a and 505b).

1.6.4. *Historia mulierum philosopharum*

1.6.4.1. The work is divided into 111 paragraphs, numbered in the margin like Laertius' *Lives*; the first 2 paragraphs function as a preface. The text is further divided into 11 unnumbered sections, corresponding to the various sects, and it ends with an address to Mme Dacier. The bibliographical references are inserted into the text, which is followed by an index of names (3 unnumbered pages).

1.6.4.2. The work lacks any form of periodization and in its place is a division by sect. The first section contains the "women philosophers of uncertain sect", in a roughly chronological order, from Hippo, daughter of the centaur Chiro, to Heloise (pp. 487a–494b). They are followed by the female Platonists (pp. 494b–496a); Academics (p. 496); Dialectics, that is to say, followers of Diodoros Cronos (pp. 496b–497a); Cyrenaics, Megarians, and Cynics (p. 497); Peripatetics (pp. 497b–498a); Epicureans (pp. 498a–499a); Stoics (p. 499); and Pythagoreans (pp. 499b–505b).

1.6.4.3. Ménage takes care above all to justify his work by referring to its historical precedents, in such a way as to prevent any objection by those who could cast doubt on the existence in women of the widespread practice of philosophy: "So great is the number of women writers that with their names alone it is possible to write a large book. But many of them have followed pleasing studies, Rhetoric, Poetry, History, Mythology, and epistolary elegance. There has been no lack, however, those who have devoted themselves to a more severe discipline, philosophy. From extracts of Sopater of Apamea made by Photius we know that Apollonius of Tyre (known as the Stoic) wrote a singular book on them. Suda informs us that the grammarian Philochorus wrote a book apart on women Pythagoreans. Juvenal too declares that in his time women dealt with philosophy. It is therefore amazing

that Didymus, the most learned grammarian of his age, and Lactantius, the most erudite ecclesiastical writer, mentioned of all the women philosophers only Themisten and Theano respectively" (*Historia mulierum*, p. 487a). The *mulieres philosophae* whom Ménage has managed to identify "in the books of the ancients" amount to 65. The criteria on which his choice is based are somewhat broad and include, for example, the practice of astrology and divination, which is considered to be a branch of philosophy (see Hippo and Anthusa, placed in the *incerta secta*), or *philosophica consolatio*, as in the case of Clea. The sect with the most women philosophers is the Pythagorean, which on its own includes two-fifths of the women listed; the presence of women in the other sects is down to a minimum, apart from the Platonic sect, where there are five women philosophers; another 19 are classified as of *incerta secta*. Those who receive most space, because of the quantity of material available, are: Aspasia, the famous hetaera of Miletus, lover and then wife of Pericles; Eudocia (that is Athenais), wife of the emperor Theodosius II; St. Catherine of Alexandria, patron of philosophy professors (Ménage dwells at length on her name and hints at the rather unreliable nature of her story as it is quoted in the sources); the Neoplatonist Hypatia; and Theano, the wife of Pythagoras.

The presence of Ménage in this little work, which is essentially a compilation, is shown above all in the historical and philological discussions, which revolve for the most part around names and kinship relations. To be noted in particular are several references to modern works on the history of philosophy which the author shows he knew well. Regarding Eurydice, the wife of Pollianus, he notes: "Jonsius in book III *De scriptoribus Historiae Philosophicae*, Chapter 6, holds her to be the daughter of Plutarch, but I confess I do not know where he can have taken this piece of information from"; later however this author is quoted with praise ("…the information is supplied by Jonsius, a most diligent and learned author of the history of philosophy"). Stanley is mentioned twice for having mixed up the Pythagorean philosophers Abrotelia, Lastenia, Nestheadusa, and Bisorronde. Moreover Ménage agrees with Vossius in deploring the lack of attention paid by scholars to the *Monumenta antiqua Pythagorica*, which had been edited by Henri Estienne as an appendix to Laertius and which he defines as *pretiosa* (pp. 489a, 498a, 502b, 504b). Besides these erudite annotations there are also several historiographical theories, such as that regarding the relationship between Pythagoras and Plato. Mentioning the Pythagorean Lastenia, Ménage notes that she is the same philosopher already quoted in the Platonic sect. "In fact Plato derived so many doctrines from Pythagoras", he observes here, "that he could be called a Pythagorean. Laertius writes of him that he mixed up the theories of the Heracliteans, the Pythagoreans, and the Socratics. But even Aristotle in book I of the Metaphysics, Chapter 6, says that on many points Plato's doctrine follows the Pythagoreans". On the other hand it is untenable to maintain the theory of those who say that Plato learned directly from Pythagoras, in Italy, the principles of his philosophy, given that Plato was born in the LXXXVIII Olympiad, according to Laertius, while Pythagoras died in the LXX Olympiad, according to Eusebius of Caesarea … (p. 504a). Not lacking, finally, are some slightly malicious comments on the philosophical aptitudes of the fair sex, in which we can glimpse, behind Ménage the

erudite philologist, Ménage the assiduous guest of salons and the darling of the *précieuses*: "In the books of the ancients I have not found any woman belonging to the Stoic school. But as Apollonius the Stoic wrote a book on women philosophers, it is likely that there was more than one who adhered to Stoicism, even though it is rare to find in women that state of the absence of the passions that was professed by the Stoics. "A woman either loves or hates: there is no middle way", said Publilius Syrus. [. . .] It may surprise us however that there were so many women Pythagorean philosophers, given that the Pythagoreans had to remain in silence for five years, and had many secrets which they were not allowed to divulge; women however are extremely loquacious, and it is difficult for them to keep a secret " (p. 499ab).

1.6.4.4. The *Historia mulierum philosopharum* is inspired by Laertius' scheme of the "lives" grouped within the framework of the sects, but this scheme is simplified because of the lack of material available: the little work has for the most part in fact the nature of a catalogue of authors rather than a collection of biographical profiles and opinions and *sententiae*. Ménage however does devote much space to the few sources he has, quoting them first in the original Greek and then in a Latin translation. His investigation makes use of first-hand material, which also includes sources not strictly philosophical, such as the *Libellus praeceptorum coniugalium* and Plutarch's *De mulierum virtutibus*. Ménage does not quote however the glosses by the jurist André Tiraqueau to the *leges connubiales*, from which he seems to have taken most of his *mulieres philosophae* (cf. Andreae Tiraquelli *Ex commentariis in Pictonum consuetudines sectio de legibus connubialibus et jure maritali* [. . .], Lyon, 1574 [1st ed. Paris, 1513], pp. 270–281, which includes a list of 286 women who distinguished themselves in the field of culture and the arts). Ménage also refers to manuscript sources, quoting numerous manuscripts from the *Bibliotheca Colbertina* and the *Bibliothèque Royale* (the present-day *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris), and he also uses information taken from coins and inscriptions, as in the case of Julia Domna, the wife of Septimius Severus. In his discussion of the sources he quotes many contemporary writers, with whom he was on terms, such as the historian Henri de Valois, the poet Pierre Petit, and the orientalist Eusèbe Renaudot.

1.6.5. The appearance of Ménage's commentary in the London edition of Laertius caused controversy in learned circles: in a letter to Heinsius dated 20th October 1664 Jean Chapelain, Ménage's former friend, says he has understood from Vossius that English scholars had a negative opinion of the *Observationes*, as they were full of *chicanes grammaticales* and plagiarism. Although it is possible that Ménage used Isaac Casaubon's *Notae*, it must be born in mind that he used numerous observations supplied by other learned friends, among whom Huet (Samfiresco, *Ménage*, pp. 128–131). The 1692 edition was received with enthusiasm in the reviews of the time. For his part Brucker talks of Ménage's commentary with praise: "he deserves the eternal gratitude of those who are interested in Diogenes Laertius and the history of philosophy" (Brucker, I, pp. 36–37). In particular he quotes the letter to Bigot in support of his own definition of *historia philosophica* as *historia ingenii*

humani, also referring to Deslandes.[17] In reality Ménage speaks of a *ingeniorum historia* in the plural, that is to say a history of individual minds, which is none other than an updated version of Laertius' *Lives*, and he is far from conceiving of *historia philosophica* as a history of the errors and the progress made by the "human intellect", understood as an entity which transcends the biographies and opinions of the different philosophers. Brucker's reference to Ménage is therefore a particularly significant example of the assimilation of erudite and philological historiography into a perspective in which theoretical presuppositions provide the criteria for the inspiration and organisation of *historia philosophica*.

As for the *Historia mulierum philosopharum*, it is not a novelty in an absolute sense, since Horn had already mentioned women philosophers in Chapter IX of the last book of his *Historia philosophica* (Leiden, 1655). Ménage's little work, however, is the first work in its own right on a subject that was highly topical in an age in which, thanks in part to the salons, women asserted their presence in French culture (it is enough to think of Mlle de Scudéry or Mme Dacier herself). Despite its modest size (Nicéron, I, p. 323 called it an "ouvrage fort mince et superficial"), it must have enjoyed a notable success, since it was the object of quotations and imitations. Bordelon, for example, was quick to add a section devoted to "women philosophers" in the second edition of his *Théatre philosophique* (see above, Intro.). Bordelon was in turn used in the third tome of H. Gautier's *Bibliothèque des philosophes et des sçavans tant anciens que modernes* (see below, Chapter 2, Introduction), in which pages 417–421 are devoted to the theme *Des femmes et filles philosophiques ou sçavantes*. Outside France Johann Esberg had in the meantime published the *Exercitium academicum mulieres philosophantes leviter adumbrans* (Uppsala, 1700). Ménage's little book was quoted among the historical and philosophical works recommended by the abbé Nicolas Lenglet du Fresnoy in his *Méthode pour étudier l'histoire* (see below, Chapter 2, Introduction). Finally it is worth remembering that in one of the nineteenth-century editions of Fénelon's *Abrégé des vies des anciens philosophes* (Paris, 1822; see below, Chapter 2, para 2.3.2) there is even an *Abrégé de la vie des femmes philosophes de l'antiquité*, in which 17 of Ménage's 65 profiles are translated into French. A new chapter in the fortune of Ménage's little work has recently been opened up with the advent of Women's Studies, thanks to its translation into English (*The History of Women Philosophers*, by B.H. Zedler, Lanham, MD, 1984) and Italian (*Storia delle donne filosofe*, by A. Parolotto, Verona 2005).

1.6.6. On Ménage's life and works: JS, XX (1692), pp. 540–552 (praise and biographical profile of Ménage); Nicéron, I, pp. 305–326; X, pp. 60–61; BUAM, XXVIII, pp. 248–255; A. Samfiresco, *Ménage polémiste, philologue, poète* (Paris, 1902); L. Cenerini, *L'eclissi della fortuna: Cyrano, Sorel, Ménage fra*

[17] After stating that "est enim haec fatorum sapientiae humanae enarratio revera historia intellectus humani", he makes it clear in a note that "Laërtii historiam adeo ingenii humani historiam appellat Menagius in *Comm. ad Laert.* proleg. p. 2; conf. Deslandes, *Histoire critique de la philosophie*, t. I, praef." (Brucker, I, p. 21; on the passage from Deslandes, see below, Chapter 3, para 3.1.3.).

letteratura e scienza (Rome, 1981); G. Ménage, *Lettres inédites à Pierre-Daniel Huet (1659–1692), publiées d'après le dossier Ashburnham de la Bibl. Laurentienne de Florence*, ed. L. Caminiti Pennarola (Naples, 1993); *Gilles Ménage grammairien et lexicographe. Le rayonnement de son oeuvre linguistique*, ed. I. Leroy Turcan (Lyon, 1995); R.G. Maber, *Publishing in the Republic of Letters. The Ménage-Groevius-Wetstein correspondence 1679–1692* (Amsterdam and New York, 2005).

On the fortune of the *Observationes* to Laertius: AE, 1692, pp. 315–319; Heumann, I, pp. 321–366; Jonsius, p. 183 (with further bibliographical information); Brucker, I, pp. 21 notes, 37–38. On the fortune of the *Historia mulierum*: HOS, VII (1691), pp. 512–515; Braun, pp. 34, 134, 372; Del Torre, p. 75; Gueroult, 1, p. 277; B.H. Zedler, "Introduction", in G. Ménage, *The History of Women Philosophers*, pp. III–XXVIII; *A History of Women Philosophers*, ed. by M.E. Waithe (Dordrecht, 1989).

1.7 Pierre Coste (1668–1747)

1.7.4. *Discours sur la philosophie ancienne et moderne*

1.7.1. Pierre Coste was born in Uzès, near Nîmes, in 1668. From a Protestant family, he was forced into exile after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which he spent in Switzerland and then Holland, where he was in contact with Bayle. In 1690 he was accepted as a *proposant* (a student of the theology faculty) by the synod of the Walloon church of Amsterdam, but he later gave up his ecclesiastical career and joined a typography as a proof reader, devoting himself to literature. In 1697 he moved to England and made friends with Locke, some of whose works he translated into French, and on whose recommendation he was received as a tutor to the young lord Shaftesbury and the duke of Buckingham, whom he accompanied on his educational tour of the Continent. Towards the end of his life he returned to France, and died in Paris in 1747.

1.7.2. Coste wrote a *Histoire de Louis de Bourbon, deuxième de nom, prince de Condé* (Cologne [in reality Amsterdam], 1693), but he distinguished himself above all for his work as a publisher and translator, taking an active part in the literary controversies of the time: *Défense de La Bruyère et de ses Caractères contre les accusations et les objections de Vigneul-Marville* (Amsterdam, 1702); *Remarques critiques sur la traduction française d'Horace par le P. Tarteron* (Amsterdam, 1710); translation of Plautus' *Captivi* (Paris, 1713); a new edition of Theophrastus' and La Bruyère's *Caractères* (Amsterdam, 1720); Montaigne's *Essais* (London, 1724); La Fontaine's *Fables* (Paris, 1743) ... He was responsible for introducing the French public at large to the philosophy of John Locke, translating his *Thoughts concerning Education* (Amsterdam, 1696; Paris, 1746^{8}), *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (Amsterdam, 1696; 1703^{3}), and *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Amsterdam, 1700, followed by another 10 editions; ed. by G.-J.-D. Moyal, Paris, 2004); he also produced a French translation of Shaftesbury's *Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour* (1710) and Newton's *Optics* (Amsterdam,

1720). Coste's first literary work came out anonymously in 1691 with a brief history of philosophy added to the third edition of the systematic work by the Cartesian Pierre-Sylvain Régis, known for his controversy with Huet: *Cours entier de philosophie, ou système général selon les principes de M. Descartes, contenant la logique, la métaphysique, la physique, et la morale. Dernière édition, enrichie d'un très grand nombre de figures, et augmentée d'un Discours sur la philosophie ancienne et moderne, où l'on fait en abrégé l'histoire de cette science* (Amsterdam: aux dépens des Huguetan, 1691), 3 vols, 4° (facs. repr. New York, 1971). The work had previously appeared with the shorter title *Système général de philosophie, contenant la logique, la métaphysique, la physique et la morale* (Paris: impr. De D. Thierry, aux dépens d'Anisson, Posuel et Rigaud, libraires à Lyon, 1690), 3 vols, 4° (new ed., Lyon: Anisson, Posuel et Rigaud, 1691, 7 vols, 12°).

The *Discours sur la philosophie ancienne et moderne* came out, as we have said, anonymously, but it was very soon attributed by Nicéron to Pierre Coste: "The *discours* which has been added to the Dutch edition", he observed with regard to Régis' *Système de philosophie*, "is very curious. It is by M. Coste, known for several elegant translations" (Nicéron, VII, p. 408). Due to a misunderstanding with the author of the *Système*, the Latin translation of the *Discours* was however printed under Régis' name (*Discursus philosophicus, in quo historia philosophiae antiquae et recentioris recensetur, per* Petrum Silvanum Regium, [no place] 1705, 12°, 211 pp.; the work does not bear the name of the translator and, according to Heumann, it was printed in Germany). This translation was reviewed by Heumann and was known to Brucker, who noted Régis among the French authors of a history of philosophy. Subseqently however, following information provided by Nicéron, he was quick to correct his original attribution (Brucker, I, p. 37; VI, p. 27). For his part Braun, who declares he has only examined the 1705 translation, attributes the work to Régis and does not even mention Coste (Braun, pp. 62–63). In reality the *Discours* clearly presents itself as an addition *ab extrinseco* to Régis' philosophical treatise; it seems to be have been added hastily (it is not even numbered) to the beginning of the part on logic and does not figure in the general summary index, which is identical to that of the first edition of the *Système*. This *abrégé* of the history of philosophy is conceived as an introduction to Régis' work: it ends in fact with his praise (written in the third person, as Brucker had pointed out in his correction): "long-known as one of the most illustrious followers of Descartes", and praise of his *Système de philosophie*, whose long-overdue publication is hailed, delayed, as it is known, because of opposition from the Archbishop of Paris.

1.7.3. The *Discours sur la philosophie ancienne et moderne* belongs to a very precise cultural framework, that of the *querelle des anciens et des modernes*, and it is necessary to bear this in mind to understand the role and the aim of Coste's brief history of philosophy. Right from the beginning, Coste vigorously takes the side of the moderns, in a veiled polemic against Rapin's *Réflexions sur la philosophie*, observing that "we must look at the ancients as simple men who could make mistakes, whose knowledge was not so perfect that we cannot add something to it". This is true above all of philosophy: "since it is a science that depends on the

precision of reasoning, which is not perfected all at once, and which is made up of an infinite number of intuitions and is aided by the experiences which chance commonly produces and does not lead to deliberately, it is obvious that the first philosophers must have left many things to do for those who come after them"; consequently "it is certain that regarding philosophy the moderns must naturally surpass the ancients. Once this point is recognised", Coste continues, "it is our intention to show by means of an *Abbreviated History of Philosophy* that in effect the ancients were not such good philosophers that it is enough to understand their judgements to know all the secrets of nature, and that philosophy has perfected itself in the extreme in the course of this century". A little further on Coste specifies the limit and at the same time the aims of his historiographical work: "our plan is not to write a whole volume, but to give a general idea of the principal opinions of each philosopher, so that they can be judged by comparing one against another" (*Discours*, in *Cours entier*, pp. 2–3 not numbered; this declaration of intent is repeated at the end of the work, p. 44).

1.7.4. *Discours sur la philosophie, où l'on voit en abrégé l'histoire de cette science*

1.7.4.1. The *Discours* takes up 44 unnumbered pages, which we quote here, for the sake of convenience, with their own numbering. Given its nature as an introduction, the little work is not presented in a systematic form; there is no subdivision into chapters or paragraphs, but in practice it is subdivided by the use of the capital letters with which authors and schools are quoted for the first time. Although they are not highlighted typographically, we can distinguish a preface (pp. 1–3) and a conclusion (pp. 43–44). The work bears marginal notes of a bibliographical or explanatory nature, abundant above all in the part regarding ancient thought.

1.7.4.2. The most general periodization used by Coste is between *philosophie ancienne* and the *philosophie moderne* which developed in the last century. The "first philosophy" was that of the Orientals, but the Greeks can claim to have been the real founders of ancient philosophy. This latter (pp. 3–32) is divided according to the traditional criterion of the sects: Ionic (which is connected to Socrates, follower of Archelaus), Italic, Academic, Peripatetic, Middle Academy, New Academy, Pyrrhonian or Sceptic, Stoic, Epicurean, and Eclectic. The period from the end of classical thought to the rise of modern philosophy is placed under the influence of Platonism (Coste here quotes several of the Fathers, as well as Julian the Apostate), and then Aristotelianism, which from the twelfth century onwards gave rise to Scholasticism (pp. 33–34), divided *ordinairement* into three periods (the first begins with Peter Lombard; the second includes the age of Albert the Great, master of Thomas Aquinas, and Duns Scotus, and was characterised by the opposing sects of the Thomists and the Scotists; and the third goes from Durand of Saint Pourçain to Gabriel Biel and was dominated by the disputes between nominalists and realists). In his presentation of modern thought (pp. 34–43) Coste limits himself to presenting those who in his opinion are the greatest philosophers (Galileo, Copernicus, Gassendi, Descartes) and some of their followers: François Bernier, a

pupil of Gassendi and the author of an *Abrégé de la philosophie de Gassendi* (1674) and, among the Cartesians, Jacques Rohault, Malebranche, and Régis himself, with whom the account ends.

1.7.4.3. The *Discours*'s placing within the framework of the *querelle* is reflected in the historiographical theory of the superiority of modern philosophy and gives rise to the notion of "progress" as a general criterion of interpretation. "Philosophy", affirms Coste at the beginning of his *Discours*, "is today at the highest degree of perfection it has ever reached. It is not in truth surprising that new discoveries are always made in this science, given the number of the great geniuses of antiquity who cultivated it: it was natural for this to occur and, if it had been to the contrary, we would have to be surprised and deplore the bad luck of the learned of the last few centuries who were not able to profit from the knowledge of those who had come before them. I know that the admirers of antiquity do not approve of this way of reasoning since, if we are to believe them, antiquity holds and will hold the place of honour in almost all the sciences: all that we can do, they say [and here there is a clear allusion to the anti-modern attitude of Rapin, even though he is never mentioned], is to discover the sublime truths that are contained in the works of the ancients; we must not aspire any higher. [. . .] We are therefore very unfortunate not to have been born in those happy times, in which Nature made those masterpieces; perhaps Heaven would have favoured us and we might have been chosen to serve as torch for our blind posterity". These ironic remarks echo the heated debates between the supporters of the ancients and the moderns, and indeed Coste explicitly refers to the considerations made by the most well-known champion of the "modernists": "But, joking apart, on what is this great difference between the ancients and us based? Did they not eat the same food as us? And do we not have a mind capable of distinguishing between true and false as they did? Frankly we can say with the pleasant and learned Monsieur de Fontenelle that the whole question of the pre-eminence between the ancients and moderns is reduced to knowing whether the trees which were once in our fields were bigger than those of today" (*Discours*, pp. 1–2).

From this fundamental theory derives Coste's overall opinion of ancient thought and Scholasticism: the doctrines of the ancients "are too opposed to one another to all be true [. . .] and are based for the most part on false or completely useless principles. Nevertheless", specifies the author, "it is certain that all the different perspectives of these ancient philosophers could serve to render philosophy more perfect every day if those who came after them had rejected what was defective in them and had profited by what was reasonable in them in order to make new discoveries in the knowledge of the truth. But because of some ridiculous obstinacy it was thought that it was not possible to add anything to the doctrines of these great men, and everyone applied themselves to the philosopher whose dogmas seemed to him to be most reasonable, and blindly followed his decisions". Thus, Coste observes making a judgement on Scholasticism, it would have been possible to make great progress in knowledge of the truth "if, instead of wasting so much time studying Aristotle, people had applied themselves to consulting their own reason (*ses propres lumières*)" (pp. 32 and 34).

The key to progress in philosophy is the use of a different method, based on reason and not on authority.[18] In harmony with the philosophical and scientific climate of the seventeenth century, and that of Cartesianism in particular, Coste shows a particular interest in method. He observes, for example, that "the method Pythagoras used to teach his followers was totally unworthy of a philosopher" and it became a source of prejudice; he praises the Socratic method on the other hand, which aimed "to accept as true only that which is clearly conceived as being true", and he contrasts it with "ordinary logic", whose method develops a tendency to disputation and quibbling. Modern philosophers are distinguished by the "new way of philosophizing", and indeed "thanks to a method which had only been known imperfectly before him, [Descartes] has discovered more truths than had been discovered in all the previous centuries" (pp. 5, 8–9, 36–37). And it is precisely the method or *manière de raisonner* that is the first of three criteria of judgement on the basis of which, on the last page of the *Discours*, Coste stresses the superiority of modern thought in greater detail; the other two criteria refer to the extent of "particular" knowledge, relative that is to physics, and the availability of scientific instruments:

"We can base the whole comparison between ancient and modern philosophy on these three points, namely the manner of reasoning, the extent of knowledge, and the aids (*secours*) necessary to find the truth, and with respect to these three points it is easy to see that the ancient philosophers are greatly inferior to the moderns. As far as the means of reasoning are concerned, in the first place, modern philosophers visibly surpass the ancients, since while the latter mostly only reasoned on vague ideas and very confused principles, the former make the point of reasoning on clear and distinct ideas, and move from simple things which are easy to understand to those which are composite and known less. Even if Descartes's philosophy had only served to introduce this new method of reasoning it would have been more worthy of respect than the whole of ancient philosophy. Now if we compare ancient philosophy with modern in relation to the extent of knowledge, the latter would be undoubtedly preferable to the former: indeed ancient philosophy made no progress in knowledge of the truth after Aristotle, it has always been restricted to very general notions, while modern philosophy fills the mind with an infinite number of particular pieces of knowledge, and it is this that proves invincibly that it is based on better principles. Finally modern philosophers have the use of aids to check many truths, which the philosophers of the first centuries lacked. Everyone knows in fact that many instruments have been invented in this century and that an infinite number of experiments and observations have been made which were unknown to the ancients,

[18] *Discours*, p. 34: "Enfin dans le dernier siècle la philosophie commença de sortir de ce rude esclavage, sous lequel elle gemissoit depuis si long-tems, et on s'avisa de philosopher par raison et non par autorité. On ne méprisa point Aristote, mais on ne le voulut plus croire sur la parole. On ne suivit ses sentimens qu'à mesure qu'on vit qu'ils étoient conformes à la vérité. On ne s'imagina point qu'il sçavoit tout ce qui se peut sçavoir, mais on tâcha de découvrir ce qui lui avoit été inconnu, ou ce qu'on ne voyoit pas clairement expliqué dans ses ouvrages. Et c'est par cette méthode qu'on porta la philosophie à un point de perfection où elle n'avoit point encore été".

which we use with great success to demonstrate many truths both in astronomy and in physics" (p. 44).

In this case too Coste seems to have Rapin in mind as his ideal antagonist, whose considerations on the value of the truth, whichever age it comes from, he echoes, adapting them to the "modernist" perspective.[19] Moreover, just as Rapin had stopped to denounce the excesses of the overzealous supporters of the ancients or the moderns, so Coste ends his little work by turning to the followers of the *nouvelle philosophie* with an appeal to balance, against all *entêtement*: "But in criticising the conduct of those who blindly embrace the cause of the ancient philosophers, we must be careful not to become infatuated with Descartes or some other modern philosopher, since it would result in more or less the same negative effect " (ibid.).

Coste's adherence to Cartesianism is not limited to the aspect of general methodology (in this regard, note the recurrent use of terms such as "evidence" and "clear and distinct" or "confused" in his discussion of ancient thought), but it also concerns the specific contents of this current of thought, becoming the yardstick of his historiographical evaluation. An example of this is the criticism of the Epicurean concept of weight as the constitutive characteristic of the atom (where weight is only a secondary quality, as explained in the account of Cartesian physics), and the stress given to the distinction between thinking substance and extended substance, "which no one had yet known properly, even though the solution to many large and important questions of physics and morality depends on this knowledge, as Descartes has clearly shown" (pp. 30 and 39; on the Cartesian distinction between primary and secondary qualities, pp. 41–42). His admiration for Descartes is not exclusive however, since Coste recognises that Galileo was "the first who dared to distance himself from the sentiments of Aristotle" (p. 35), and he praises the intellectual, literary, and human qualities of Gassendi. Moreover he devotes much space to his account of the thought of Epicurus, who receives the greatest number of pages (pp. 24–32). Coste illustrates Epicurus' empiricist gnoseology as if he adhered to it himself and he defends Epicurus from the slander aimed at his ethics, which he considers to be "in harmony with nature and common sense" (unlike the "extravagant morality" of the Stoics, which is subject to criticism), even though he does not accept Epicurus' doctrine of the mortality of the soul and a purely earthly happiness. Coste on the other hand systematically criticises Epicurean physics, which, "by removing from God the task of producing and preserving the world", reveals itself to be "so absurd that it is impossible to examine it with any attention without judging it to be the work of a dissolute imagination". As for Epicurus's theory that the world is the result of a "fortuitous combination of atoms", he observes that "one must really pretend to be

[19] *Discours*, p. 44: "Il est maintenant aisé de conclure qu'il n'y a rien de plus ridicule que cette profonde vénération que certaines gens ont pour les opinions des Anciens jusqu'à rejetter les sentimens des Modernes sans les vouloir examiner. Car, outre que la Vérité est de tous les siècles et que lors qu'on fait profession de chercher cette Vérité, il faut tout examiner et ne recevoir les sentimens des hommes quel qu'ils soient, Anciens ou Modernes, qu'autant qu'ils nous paroissent raisonnables, il est évident par ce que nous venons de dire que les Philosophes Modernes ont en effet beaucoup encheri sur les Anciens".

blind to imagine that a work in which all is disposed in such good order and contains such an admirable variety, can be the effect of chance" (pp. 24–31).

After Epicurus, the philosophers dealt with at greatest length are Aristotle (pp. 13–20) and Descartes (pp. 37–43), followed by Plato (pp. 10–13), the Stoics (pp. 21–23), and Socrates (pp. 8–10). There is a lengthy account of Aristotle's logic and physics, not lacking in value judgements: according to Coste there is "much confusion" in Aristotle's logic, but he recognises that Aristotle has the gift of great acumen, and judges his analysis of the demonstrative procedure as "one of the best passages" in his philosophy. Aristotelian physics is thoroughly criticised because it is based on "vague and indeterminate ideas" which are not able to explain the effects of nature, and because it is almost always dealt with "in a highly metaphysical way"; Coste does not limit himself to this overall judgement, but pauses over a critical analysis of Aristotle's treatment of the four elements.[20] More benevolent is his opinion of Aristotle's ethics, which is judged to be "the most perfect" of his works, while his metaphysics (which is given barely half a page) is defined as "a mass of very abstract and very confused maxims and research", from which the followers of the Peripatetic sect took the concepts of prime matter and substantial forms, "all ideas which have no reality". As for Plato (whose thought is confused with that of the Neoplatonists), Coste quotes the Patristic theories whereby Plato took some of his doctrines from the Old Testament, but he does not express a personal judgement on them; he criticises on the other hand the theory that the world is animated, just as – like a good mechanicist – he had previously criticised Thales' hylozoism and the Pythagorean doctrine of souls diffused in the air.[21] Very little

[20] *Discours*, p. 18: "Quelle raison peut-on avoir d'établir le nombre des Elemens sur des qualitez de pesanteur et de legereté en disant sans preuve qu'il y a des Corps qui sont pesants, et d'autres qui sont legers par leur nature? N'est-il pas plûtot évident à ceux, qui ne jugent des choses que par des idées claires et distinctes, qu'il est indifferent à un corps d'être mû ou de ne l'être pas, d'être mû de haut en bas, ou de bas en haut? Mais quand nous dirions sur le témoignage d'Aristote qu'il y a quatre Elemens tels qu'il les imagine, deux pesans et deux legers par leur nature, comment nous en servirons-nous pour expliquer la nature? Ces quatre Elemens, selon ce Philosophe, ne sont point le Feu, l'Air, l'Eau, et la Terre que nous voyons, nous ne les connoissons donc pas par les sens. Nous les connoissons encore moins par la raison, car nous ne sçaurions en avoir une idée distincte par le moyen de ces qualitez de legereté et de pesanteur, et si nous ignorons la nature des corps simples, [quel est] le moyen de jamais découvrir la nature des autres corps, qui tous en sont composez?".

[21] *Discours*, pp. 3–4: "Aristote rapporte que Thalès, ayant consideré les proprietés de l'ayman et de l'ambre, s'imagina que tous les êtres étoient animez, et que le monde étoit plein d'esprits. C'est philosopher à bon marché que de raisonner sur ces sortes de principes; il n'y a rien de si surprenant ni si obscur dans la nature, dont par ce moyen on ne puisse rendre raison en fort peu de temps: a-t-on de la peine à comprendre la cause de quelque effet? En l'attribuant à un esprit, on est toujours assuré de se tirer d'affaire. Mais ce qu'il y a de fâcheux dans cette manière de philosopher, c'est qu'elle n'est propre qu'à nous faire croire que nous sçavons ce qui nous est absolument inconnu, au lieu d'éclairer l'esprit, qui est le but de la veritable philosophie". As for Pythagoras, "il s'imaginait que l'air étoit rempli d'âmes, auxquelles il attribuoit la cause des songes des hommes et des bêtes, et plusieurs autres effets ordinaires. Nous pouvons bien dire encore que c'est philosopher à bon marché que de raisonner sur de semblables principes" (p. 6).

space is given to the Eclectics and the Sceptics on the other hand, who evidently aroused no great interest in the Cartesian Coste.

It is worth devoting a word to the question of the relationship between Oriental and Greek philosophy. After recalling how "everyone agrees that philosophy came from the Orientals", even though opinions on the first founders diverge, Coste observes that in any case "this first philosophy was so unformed, that it hardly deserves the name. It could more rightly be called a superstitious theology, since in Egypt it was made to pass for a part of religion and was wrapped in an infinite number of mysteries to make it more venerable; among the Chaldeans it merely concerned superstitious observations or subjects which are of the competence of theology rather than philosophy". Although they received the first smattering of philosophy from the Chaldeans, it was the Greeks therefore who "properly speaking began to reason with some precision and order, in such a way that we can call them the first founders of ancient philosophy" (*Discours*, p. 3). Braun (p.63) stressed the innovatory nature of these ideas, but we must bear in mind that Rapin had already expressed an analogous rejection of the "philosophicity" of Oriental thought, which was probably what inspired Coste. Another idea of some interest concerns the relationship between philosophy and religion: Coste condemns the attempt by the Scholastics (defined as "alleged philosophers") to explain theology with their "thousand thorny questions", but he also distances himself from the Platonism of the Fathers, a source of heresies, and he declares as "absurd" the intention of mixing the doctrine of Christ with "foreign and abstract ideas" (*Discours*, pp. 32–33). As for more recent thinkers, he underlines the fact that, although followers of Descartes, neither Malebranche nor Régis blindly accept all of Descartes' theories, but are ready to distance themselves from those not based on clear enough reasons (p. 43).

1.7.4.4. In his treatment of ancient and medieval thought, Coste adopts a division by sects, which is simplified however and reduced to its essential elements, giving greater importance to the fundamental doctrines of the founders of the sects and omitting the traditional list of followers. At the beginning of the *Discours* he notes that "it is very difficult to speak of the different sects of the ancient philosophers, since those who have dealt with the subject have not demonstrated with sufficient precision what differentiates one from another. Diogenes Laertius confuses them; Varro counts 288 of them, Themistius 300. To avoid these equally defective extremes", Coste continues, "we will content ourselves by speaking of the most well-known philosophers and those that were the leaders of the sects, who have caused some stir in the world. In any case we will merely indicate the principles and the general maxims of each sect, without going into any exact detail on all the doctrines which belong to them" (*Discours*, p. 2). In this case too, the author seems to be referring directly to Rapin's *Réflexions* (see above, 1.3.4.4.).

It must also be noted that, unlike Villemandy, Coste limits the use of the term "sect" to ancient and medieval philosophers, since modern thought is free from the spirit of authority which characterised the ancient schools. In his account of the principal writers (Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Zeno the Stoic, Epicurus,

and Descartes) the doctrines are presented in a systematic order, the same as that followed in Régis's treatise (logic, metaphysics, physics, and ethics). The account is brief but accurate, and is sometimes accompanied by critical observations; in these cases Coste does not limit himself to expressing a negative judgement, but motivates it with clear arguments. The bio-bibliographical aspect is neglected to the advantage of the doctrinal contents: the biographical profiles which precede the account of the thought of the major writers are very brief and regard the ancients above all (for Descartes only his date of birth is given, for example). Coste for the most part chooses not to quote from the writings of the philosophers examined. Only in the case of Epicurus does he cite several passages from the *Letter to Menecaeus*, while he quotes the four rules of the Cartesian method in full and mentions the *Principia philosophiae* concerning the strong links in Descartes between method and physics (*Discours*, pp. 25, 27, 38, 42; also see p. 12, where there is a reference to the *Timaeus* for the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul). The sources quoted in the margin are not numerous: they include Diogenes Laertius and Cicero, Lucretius and Seneca, as well as modern writers such as Sarpi (whose "without Aristotle we would not have many articles of faith" is quoted), Stanley (on the philosophy of the Chaldeans), and the contemporaries Jacques Du Rondel (he too a Hugonot, a friend and colleague of Bayle in Sedan), whose *Dissertation sur le chénisque de Pythagore* (1690) is quoted, and Jacques Parrain des Coutures, author of *La morale d'Épicure, avec des réflexions* (1685) and translator into French of Lucretius.

1.7.5. Thanks to its insertion into a work of notable resonance like Régis' *Cours entier de philosophie*, the anonymous *Discours sur la philosophie ancienne et moderne* – written by a young man still unknown in the *République des lettres*, and attributed by some indeed to Régis himself – imposed itself on the attention of the major literary reviews of the period: there was a presentation of its contents in a review of the *Cours entier* in the *Histoire des ouvrages des sçavans*, the *Bibliothèque universelle et historique*, and the *Acta eruditorum*. In particular, Le Clerc observed that "the author seems to have taken a part of what he says from a work by Mr. Stanley [i.e. the *Historia philosophiae orientalis*, translated by Le Clerc himself] [. . .] and from the *Réflexions* of father Rapin *sur la philosophie*, whose precise words one might even say he sometimes copies" (BUH, 1691, p. 75). This second observation confirms what we have pointed out more than once in the previous pages. The review in the *Acta eruditorum* was written by Leibniz (cf. V.I. Comparato, *Giuseppe Valletta* (Naples, 1970), p. 132n), who notes that the *Discours sur la philosophie* is "perhaps a little too severe in its criticism of the ancients". In providing a brief summary of the contents the reviewer does not avoid making a number of comments: he points out, for example, that the author of the *Discours* despises Aristotle's physics, "although Descartes seems to have followed Aristotle's theories, especially on continuum and fullness, as in other cases he has followed Democritus" (AE, 1692, p. 136). An almost enthusiastic opinion was expressed by Heumann, on the other hand, who reviewed the Latin translation of the *Discours* apart and presented this little work as a "pleasant and useful compendium of the history of the philosophers". The mistaken attribution to Régis in fact led Heumann

to see in the *Discours* a valid example of that *Historia philosophica* based on speculative positions and not only on erudite research, which he had theorised in his introduction to the *Acta philosophorum.*[22] Brucker in turn notes that the *Discours sur la philosophie* "examines the history of ancient and recent philosophy in a succinct but elegant fashion and with great judgement", and he considered it worth reading, also bearing in mind the modest panorama offered by French philosophical historiography (Brucker, I, p. 37).

Despite its nature as a simple *abrégé* written in the space of a few months, the *Discours sur la philosophie ancienne et moderne* occupies an important position in the context of late seventeenth-century philosophical historiography since it represents, so to speak, the historico-philosophical precipitate of Cartesianism. Braun observes to this regard that it "renews a certain number of common places, starting with a philosophy which has not lead to a re-definition of the past, but which, once it finally achieved success in France, nevertheless inaugurated original norms of judgement" (Braun, p. 63). The attribution of the little work to Coste rather than to P.-S. Régis leads us however to correct and reappraise several of Braun's statements. In the first place the *Discours* was certainly not written "around 1680" (the date when Régis began to write his *Système de philosophie*), but in 1691; this latter date is confirmed by references to Du Rondel's work and Stanley's Latin translation, which appeared the previous year. The "distance" between the death of Descartes and the first consistent reflections of Cartesianism in the history of philosophy is thus increased by another decade. In the second place we must correct Braun's statement (taking up Heumann's opinion) that "the originality of this little treatise resides above all in the fact that it was written by a philosopher. In effect, up until then it was above all philologists who had been interested in writing histories of philosophy". In reality Coste was a man of letters rather than a philosopher, and hence the *Discours* represents if anything the *trait d'union* between a popularist historiography, like Rapin's, and the systematic philosophy of a militant Cartesian like Régis. In this regard it is significant that the idea of adding a historical introduction to the *Système de philosophie* came precisely from the Amsterdam publisher, who belonged to a cultural milieu in which interest in Cartesianism was accompanied by a historical awareness which in the preceding decades had given birth to the genre of *Historia philosophica*.

1.7.6. On Coste's life and works: "La vie de Coste et anecdotes sur ses ouvrages", in J. Locke, *Que la religion chrétienne est très raisonnable* [. . .], eds. H. Bouchilloux and M.-C. Pitassi (Oxford, 1999); Nicéron, VII, pp. 402–411 (on P.-S. Régis); Haag, *La France protestante*, IV, pp. 70–71; DBF, IX, cols. 805–806; Hazard, pp. 70–71,

[22] Heumann, I, p. 1064: "Weil diese *Historia philosophiae* von einem *philosopho* ist verfertiget worden, und also den Nahmen einer *Historiae philosophicae* mit Recht verdienet, wie ich dergleichen gleich im ersten Capitel meiner Einleitung gewünschet habe, so können wir uns schon zum voraus gute Hoffnung machen, dass wir hier keine *ohne iudicio* zusammen geschriebene *Collectanea de Historia philosophorum*, wie beym Vossio, Hornio, Stanlejo, etc. sondern etwas gutes und gründliches antreffen werden".

248–249; R. Shackleton, "Renseignements inédits sur Locke, Coste et Boubier", *Revue de littérature comparée*, XXVII (1953), 3, pp. 319–322; J. Hampton, "Les traductions françaises de Locke au XVIIIe siècle", *ibi*, XXIX (1955), 2, pp. 240–251; *The Correspondence of John Locke*, ed. E.S. De Beer, 8 vols. (Oxford, 1976–1989), *ad indicem*; R. Hutchison, *Locke in France, 1688–1734* (Oxford, 1991); M.E. Rumbold, *Traducteur huguenot: Pierre Coste* (New York, 1991); *Dictionnaire des journeaux, 1600–1789*, pp. 605, 710, 1016; B. Lagarrigue, *Un temple de la culture européenne (1728–1753): l'histoire externe de la "Bibliothèque raisonnée des ouvrages de savants de l'Europe"* (Nijmegen, 1993), pp. 35–40, 69, 104; J. Le Clerc, *Epistolario*, eds. M.G. Zaccone Sina and M. Sina (Florence, 1997), *ad indicem*; J. Schøsler, *L'*Essai sur l'entendement *de Locke et la lutte philosophique en France au XVIIIe siècle. L'histoire des traductions, des éditions et de la diffusion journalistique (1688–1742)* (Oxford, 2001).

On the fortune of the *Discours*: HOS, VII (1691), pp. 530–531; BUH, XXI (1691), pp. 75–77; AE, 1692, p. 136; Struve, I, p. 158; Heumann, I, pp. 1061–1070; Brucker, I, p. 37; VI, p. 27; Degérando, I, p. 129.

On criticism: Braun, pp. 62–63; Del Torre, p. 43 note; G. Piaia, "Intorno alle origini della moderna storiografia filosofica", *Verifiche*, VIII (1979), pp. 228–231; Gueroult, 1, p. 279.

1.8 Edmond Pourchot (1651–1734)

Institutiones philosophicae

1.8.1. Edmond Pourchot (*Purchotius*) was one of the most renowned philosophy teachers at the University of Paris in the seventeenth century. Born in Poilly in 1651, he studied in Auxerre and then in Paris, at the *Collège des Grassins*, where he began to teach philosophy at the age of only 26; he later moved to the *Collège Mazarin* or "Four Nations". Trained in the works of Descartes, in his scholastic teaching he made room for physics and geometry and attracted a large number of students, arousing the envy of his colleagues who limited themselves to more traditional teaching. In 1671 he was accused of Cartesianism in the Paris parlement and was defended by his friend Boileau, who in his *Arrêt* jokingly called the supporters of the new philosophy *Pourchotistes*. In 1703 he resigned from the chair of philosophy and devoted himself to the study of Hebrew, later teaching the language to young theologians and opening a school in the *Collège de Sainte Barbe*. He was rector of the Sorbonne seven times and its *syndic* for 40 years. He died in Paris in 1734.

1.8.2. The results of Pourchot's long teaching career were gathered together into a textbook entitled *Institutio philosophica ad faciliorem veterum ac recentiorum philosophorum lectionem comparata* (Paris: apud J.-B. Coignard, 1695), 4 vols, 12° (the first includes logic, metaphysics, and elements of geometry, the second general physics, the third special physics, and the fourth ethics and a series of *Exercitationes scholasticae*). The work was subsequently perfected by Pourchot,

who worked on it until he lost his sight, and it was republished several times with its title in the plural form: *Institutiones philosophicae* [. . .] (Paris, 1700; Lyon, 1711, 1716–1717, 1733; Paris, 1733). The book found favour in Italy too, since it was reprinted three times in Venice by J. Manfré (1713, 1720, 1730) and once in Padua by the typography of the Seminary (1738). The *Exercitationes scholasticae in varias partes philosophiae, praesertimque in Aristotelis metaphysicam, sive Series disputationum ontologicarum naturali ordine dispositarum, quibus praemissum est breve compendium philosophiae*, was republished apart by the same J.-B. Coignard in 1700 and 1711; an *Appendix ad Institutiones philosophicas* appeared in Paris, published by Le Breton le fils, in 1733. Pourchot also left some *mémoires*, the titles of which are recorded in the 1759 edition of Moréri's *Dictionnaire*. The first volume of the *Institutiones philosophicae* includes a *Praefatio* of 31 unnumbered pages (1713 Venice edition, used here), which is mostly devoted to an outline of the history of philosophy.

1.8.3. Pourchot does not make any theoretical observations on the history of philosophy, which clearly has a subsidiary role as an introduction to the systematic treatment of philosophy, giving the student a framework of the sects which followed on from one another in the course of history. As for the author's own speculative positions, he can be placed mid-way between traditional scholasticism, which still dominated in French academic culture in the late seventeenth century, and the presence of the "new philosophy": he rejects, for example, substantial forms. But, judging by Spink's account, it does not seem that he went very far in the direction of Cartesianism.

1.8.4. *Institutiones philosophicae*

1.8.4.1. The *Praefatio* to the *Institutiones philosophicae* is divided into three sections: the first (pp. i–v, not numbered) has no title and concerns the origins of philosophy; the second (pp. vi–xxiv) presents a historical review under the title *Illustriores philosophorum sectae*; and the third provides indications on the structure of the work (*Ratio et partitio operis*, pp. xxiv-xxxi). The outline of the history of philosophy has no notes; the infrequent references to the sources are placed directly in the text.

1.8.4.2. In Pourchot's account we can distinguish three periods: pre-Greek, Graeco-Roman and medieval, and modern. In ancient thought there are two fundamental sects: the Dogmatic (divided in turn into Ionic and Italic) and the Academic, whose *princeps* was Socrates and which developed with Plato and the Old and New Academy. In the meantime, however, "after the death of Plato and Speusippus, the rest of Socrates's followers in the Academy abandoned the timid method of philosophizing which had been that of Plato [who never gave any certain solution to his investigations] and, transferring themselves to the Dogmatics, constituted the triple sect of the Peripatetics, Stoics, and Epicureans" (*Institutiones philosophicae*, p. xii). Plato's doctrine enjoyed great success in the eight centuries after Christ, after which the Arabs brought Aristotle's thought back to life, which migrated to Europe and in particular to Paris; among the Scholastics or "new Peripatetics" the

most illustrious sects, born in Paris, were those of the Thomists, the Scotists, and the Nominalists. They remained in the schools up until the present age, when Galileo "tried new roads"; among the *recentiores* the most famous sects are the those of the Gassendians and the Cartesians.

1.8.4.3. In the opening pages of the *Praefatio* Pourchot takes up the theme of *antiquissima sapientia*, which Adam had without any effort and which the philosophers attempted to restore starting from their experience of sensible things. In harmony with this approach Pourchot explicitly opposes Laertius, who placed the birth of philosophy in Greece, and establishes a continuous link between Abraham, the ancient Egyptians, the Phoenicians, and the Greeks (*Institutiones philosophicae*, p. 11). Regarding the Platonic method Pourchot quotes Cicero's opinion in full ("in his books many things are discussed, for and against, questions are asked on everything, nothing certain is said"). Scholastic philosophy is called "disputatious and argumentative", but its method is judged to be of great use, "as long as one deduces only correct conclusions from certain or probable principles, and does not go astray in the vain and futile disputes of the sophists" (p. xvi). As for the "new roads" trodden by Galileo and other moderns, which in the schools shook off "the yoke of inveterate habit", it must be noted that this novelty is identified with the use of the ancient doctrines of Democritus and Epicurus: "Gassendi, Descartes, Harvey, Malpighi, Borelli, and many others re-established the mechanical philosophy once cultivated by Democritus and Epicurus but then abandoned for many centuries, and they reformed it in many places according to what seemed necessary" (pp. xix–xx). The review of the most illustrious sects ends with a word on Chinese thought, which had become accessible thanks to the publication in Paris in 1687 of the work *Confucius, Sinarum philosophus, sive Scientia Sinensis*, edited by the Jesuits. "From this work", notes Pourchot, "we may deduce that philosophy, above all that which is devoted to the customs and the institution of civil life, is by no means neglected even in the nations of the Far East, but was held in the highest esteem many centuries ago" (p. xxiii). Pourchot provides some information on Confucius and his descendents and points out the "distinguished temperament" and "sharp judgement" shown by Confucius in moral science. This digression takes up a full two pages and is something of an exception in the *Praefatio* as a whole, but reflects the lively interest in Chinese philosophy that was greatly felt in late seventeeth- and early eighteenth-century culture.

1.8.4.4. Pourchot limits himself to outlining a schematic history of the sects, neglecting almsost completely the doctrinal contents and limiting his biographies of the major authors to the essential facts (Thales, Pythagoras, Socrates, Aristotle, Gassendi, and Descartes; Plato is mentioned without anything about him added). The sources used most are Diogenes Laertius and Cicero and, for Scholasticism, de Launoy; for pre-Greek philosophy he quotes Joseph Flavius.

1.8.5. This brief outline of the history of philosophy, though modest in scope, has two aspects which are worthy of note: it represents one of the first cases of the addition of a history of philosophy to a French University textbook, to function as

an introduction (Villemandy's textbook was in fact unfinished, while Régis' *Cours entier de philosophie* was destined for a learned public and was a sort of counter-manual in opposition to the works which circulated in the schools). In the second place we must bear in mind the work's large circulation, which was noted by the *Journal des sçavans* (November 23rd, 1711) and attributed to the fact that "it unites in few words, with great order, what the greatest ancient and modern men have left for us in every part of philosophy" (JS, L, 1711, II, p. 595). For several decades the brief pages of the *Praefatio* to the *Institutiones philosophicae* constituted the way in which many students of philosophy, French and Italian, were informed of the historical events of their discipline.

1.8.6. On Pourchot's life, works, and speculative orientation: BUAM, XXXV, pp. 556–558; Bouillier, I, pp. 469–471; Abbé Mouchot, *Notice sur Pourchot, recteur de l'Université de Paris* (Auxerre, 1888); Spink, pp. 191, 227; Martin, *Livre, pouvoirs et société*, pp. 881–882; G. Belgioioso, *La variata immagine di Descartes. Gli itinerari della metafisica tra Parigi e Napoli* (Lecce, 1999), *passim*; M.G. Zaccone Sina, 'Il volto cartesiano dell'analogia in alcune pagine di Pourchot, F. Lamy e Fénelon', *Rivista di storia della filosofia*, XLIX (2004), pp. 707–735; L. Brockliss, "The Moment of No Return. The University of Paris and the Death of Aristotelianism", *Science & Education*, XV (2006), 2–4, pp. 259–278.

On his fortune: JS, XXIV (1696), p. 156; XXIX (1701), p. 509–512; L (1711), II, pp. 594–599; GLI, XIII (1713), pp. 500–501; NL, II (1715), pp. 214–215; AE Suppl., VI (1717), pp. 118–124.

Chapter 2
Philosophical Historiography in France from Bayle to Deslandes

Gregorio Piaia

Introduction

The appearance of Deslandes' *Histoire critique de la philosophie* in 1737 marks a definite leap in quality with respect to the philosophical historiography previously produced in France, which remained in the margins of the genre of *historia philosophica* even into the first decades of the eighteenth century, and which, in its approach, was not able to go beyond such seventeenth-century "histories" as those produced by Rapin, Coste, or Thomassin. This "leap" was premised on Bayle's *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, a work which, paradoxically, belongs to a different literary genre from that of the "general history of philosophy", but which made an essential contribution to the origin of this genre and the establishment of a "critical" history in the two paradigmatic versions by Deslandes and Brucker. Bayle's contribution expressed itself above all in the application to historical knowledge of several methodical principles taken from Cartesianism, and hence in the "scientific" justification of such knowledge thanks to the attribution of a degree of certainly to factual truths, guaranteed – or better pursued to the point of *désespoir* – by a refined and insistent practice of accurate and careful historical inquiry. The extension of critical investigation from *faussetez de fait*, which concern historical and philological facts, to *faussetez philosophiques et théologiques*, which pepper the array of ancient and modern thinkers in the big folio volumes of the *Dictionnaire*, allows us to see a conception of the history of philosophy as a history of human "errors", conducted with a spirit of radical anti-dogmatism and a veiled, and at times open, solidarity with the "erring". We thus find the emergence of evaluation in the history of philosophy, that is to say the need for that critical discernment or *judicium* whose lack in the erudite histories of the seventeenth century was to be denounced by Heumann. Besides the eclipse of erudite research for its own sake, the reasons for writing the history of philosophy also change, as concerns of an apologetic religious

G. Piaia (✉)
Università di Padova, Dipartimento di Filosofia, Piazza Capitaniato 3, 35139 Padova, Italy
e-mail: gregorio.piaia@unipd.it

G. Piaia, G. Santinello (eds.), *Models of the History of Philosophy*, International Archives of the History of Ideas, Archives internationales d'histoire des idées,
DOI 10.1007/978-90-481-9507-7_2, © Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2011

nature disappear (concerns which had been so alive in the works of the Catholics Rapin and Saint-Aubin, the Hugonot Villemandy, or the Pietist Buddeus) and we see the genre's ethical function stressed as an antidote against the pernicious fruits of "malice" and "ignorance", "vanity" and "adulation". A number of theories and historiographical approaches derive from this general attitude which clearly distance themselves from the traditional interpretative baggage of *historia philosophica*: we can think of the use of a large number of "minor" or "rebel" thinkers, made possible by the ample room for manoeuvre which Bayle possessed thanks to the alphabetical structure of his *Dictionnaire*; or the adoption of a category like "Spinozism", which goes beyond the rigid and extrinsic scheme of the "great ages" and enables us to grasp the speculative identity of writers or movements of thought which existed in different periods and places; or yet again, the affirmation of the radical difference between ancient thought and modern, Christian thought, which fundamentally subverts that Patristic and Renaissance Platonic tradition which had largely influenced seventeenth-century philosophical historiography.

Given a context so rich in potential, the histories of philosophy written in the first three decades of the new century are, as we have said, of a modest level, and we cannot exclude the possibility that it was precisely that phenomenon of exceptional cultural importance that was the *Dictionnaire*, with its nature as a true historical and philosophical "library", which contributed to block the need for a great general history of philosophy of the type that was to be written by Deslandes. These inital works on the history of philosophy were intimately linked with the cultural climate of the late seventeenth century: firstly because two of the five works examined (Huet's *Traité philosophique* and the *Abrégé des vies des anciens philosophes* attributed to Fénelon) had been written around 1690 and were published posthumously in the 1720s. This does not mean however that they seemed out of date in their taste and their concerns, since Huet's work was at the centre of a lively debate which also touched on the history of philosophy, while the little work by Fénelon, which was based on the classical genre of the "lives", directly inspired Dupont-Bertris' *Éloges et caractères des philosophes les plus célèbres*. The *Histoire de la philosophie païenne* by Lévesque de Burigny, on the other hand, falls into the doxographical tradition, even though it was not immune from the influence of Bayle's methodology. As for the *Histoire de la philosophie* contained in Saint-Aubin's *Traité de l'opinion* – the only one of these treaties to cover the entire historical course of philosophy – it belongs to that genre of populist polyhistory which had already achieved success with Rapin, and it does not go beyond the traditional distinction between a *historia sectarum* and a *historia doctrinarum*; it is characterised if anything by its speculative relativism, which lends itself to an interesting comparison with the positions of Huet and Bayle himself, and reflects the spiritual climate of early Enlightenment in which the definitive end to the pro- or anti-Cartesian polemic was accompanied by an attenuation of the speculative commitment. These histories of philosophy are all written in French and, apart from Huet's *Traité philosophique*, are of a populist nature; purely erudite research was banned in a literary production which aimed above all at being well-received by the public: "The public has its own taste", as the editor of Fénelon's *Abrégé* tells the reader, "its criticism is imperious,

and its decrees are sovereign. It thinks what it likes both of the Author and the Work [. . .] it calls them all to its Tribunal and decides the Question" (Fénelon, *Abrégé*, 1726 ed., pp. iv–v).

Besides the works which are systematically analysed here, we must signal the existence of numerous other writings, in which the treatment of the history of philosophy is restricted to periods or smaller themes, or is linked to the broader perspective of the history of science or culture. The overall picture which emerges gives us a number of points for reflection of a certain interest, which compensate in part for the lack of great general histories of philosophy. Regarding Antiquity, for example, we have *Les principes de la nature suivant les opinions des anciens philosophes, avec un abrégé de leurs sentimens sur la composition des corps. Où l'on fait voir que toutes leurs opinions sur ces principes peuvent se réduire aux deux sectes, des Atomistes, et des Académiciens* (Paris: A. Cailleau, 1725), 2 vols, 12°, by Francesco Mario Pompeo Colonna, a native of Rome who had long lived in Paris, where he collaborated with Henri de Boulainvilliers († 1722). The latter, an heir of that *libertinage érudit* which continued to produce a rich clandestine literature throughout the course of the seventeenth century, is attributed with a *Histoire des opinions des anciens sur la nature de l'âme* (cf. R. Simon, *Henry de Boulainviller. Oeuvres philosophiques* (The Hague, 1973–1975), I, pp. 253–291). The theme of "Spinozism" comes to the fore in the brief but interesting *Réflexions sur l'ancienne philosophie des Caldéens, qui a passé aux autres Nations, et qui a été renouvellée par Spinosa*, which is part of a series of *Remarques critiques* written by an anonymous Oratorian against Pierre-Valentin Faydit, who had accused Malebranche of Spinozism (BCr, III, 1708, pp. 506–546).

A theme which was particularly debated in this period because of its religious implications was the *conformité* or not of pagan doctrines (Platonism in particular) with Christian ones: Thomassin had emphatically asserted it, Bayle had resolutely denied it, while Burigny, as we shall see later, denounced the "defect" of wanting to harmonise the ancients with Christianity at all costs and criticised the excessive concordism of Huet and Steuco. Close to Thomassin's position is the Jesuit Michel Mourgues, who planned to set out the theological and philosophical doctrines of the Greeks as an explanatory introduction to Theodoret's *Therapeutica*. The plan was carried out only for the theological part with a *Plan théologique du Pythagorisme* in 2 volumes, which opens with a treatise *De l'unité de Dieu selon les sçavans du Paganisme* and goes on to examine the relationship between the supreme God and the inferior gods, the atheism of the pagans, and the Platonic trinity . . . What results is a history of ancient theology built according to the method of the *placita*, later also adopted by Burigny. In a *Lettre préliminaire*, Mourgues reviews the sources (praising Plotinus in particular), vigorously adopts the theory of *pia philosophia,* and justifies the importance given to the "Pythagorism" in the title of the work, by noting that is at the origin of all the other Greek schools "like the different heresies with respect to a religion, or the different dialects with respect to an original language" (M. Mourgues, *Plan théologique du Pythagorisme, et des autres sectes sçavantes de la Grèce, pour servir d'éclaircissement aux ouvrages polémiques des Pères contre les Payens. Avec la traduction de la Thérapeutique de Théodoret, où l'on voit*

l'abrégé de ces fameuses controversies (Toulouse: J. Loyau, 1712), I, pp. iii, ix, xv–xvi, xviii; this work was to be quoted by Deslandes regarding the derivation from Heraclitus of the Platonic doctrine of the Word: cf. *Histoire critique*, II, p. 340).

In the same period the influence of Greek philosophy on the Fathers was examined by another Jesuit, *père* Jean-François Baltus, in a polemic against the *Platonisme dévoilé, ou Essai touchant le Verbe platonique* by the Protestant minister Matthieu Souverain, published posthumously in Cologne in 1700, and some articles by Le Clerc. Against the "alleged Platonism of the Fathers" which the Socinians appealed to in order to attribute the "first idea" of the mystery of the Trinity to Plato, Baltus, in his *Défense des SS. Pères* (1711), claimed the autonomy and originality of the Christian thought of the first centuries with regard to Plato, recognising at the most an exclusively Neoplatonic influence: in this way the need for a historical and a critical distinction between the philosophy of Plato and Neoplatonism, which in the contemporary opinion formed a single doctrinal complex, started to make headway (cf. Schiavone, *La letteratura plotiniana*, pp. 55–56). It is also worth noting an observation made by Baltus in the *Avant-Propos* of his work, which links the widespread opinion of the "Platonism of the Fathers" to an arbitrary use of historical symmetry.[1] Nor should we neglect a later work by the same author, the *Jugement des SS. Pères sur la morale de la philosophie payenne*, it too based on the scheme of the *placita*, which condemns "the excessive praise which some writers today have given to pagan morality, to the detriment of the Christian" (the author is referring, among others, to André Dacier's translation of the Platonic dialogues and his *Vie de Pythagore*, which appeared in 1706), and takes up a stance against the exaggerated and uncritical concordism of Steuco (J. Baltus, *Jugement des SS. Pères sur la morale de la philosophie payenne* (Strasbourg: J. Renauld Doulssecker, 1719), pp. v and 411–412; on the history of the thought of the first centuries of the Christian era see also Isaac de Beausobre, *Histoire critique de Manichée et du manichéisme* (Amsterdam: Bernard, 1734–1739), 2 vols, of particular interest for its relationship with the treatment given in Bayle's *Dictionnaire*).

The apologetic religious intent also constitutes the background to the history of Pyrrhonism outlined in Jean-Claude Sommier's *Histoire dogmatique de la Religion, ou la Religion prouvée par l'authorité divine et humaine, et par les lumières de la raison* (Champs-Paris-Nancy: J.L. Bouchard, 1708–1714), 4 vols: in the *Dissertation préliminaire* there is a *Histoire des Pyrrhoniens* (I, pp. vii–xxvi) and then a *Histoire du Pyrrhonisme, ou des raisons sur lequelles les Pyrrhoniens*

[1] J.-F. Baltus, *Défense des SS. Pères accusez de platonisme* (Paris: Le Conte and Montalant, 1711), *Avant-Propos*, p. 2: the opinion was born "en jugeant trop facilement des siècles passez par celuy auquel ils vivoient, et de la méthode que les anciens Chrétiens ont suivie dans leurs études, par celle qu'ils ont vue en usage dans les siècles postérieurs. Ainsi, comme depuis environ le XIIIe siècle la philosophie d'Aristote a regné dans les Écoles chrétiennes; que presque tous les docteurs catholiques, qu'ont paru depuis ce tems-là, ont été élevez dans cette philosophie [...] on a cru qu'il en avoit été de même de la philosophie de Platon dans les premiers siècles du Christianisme" (on the outcome in the German Lutheran field of this controversy, which was sparked in 1632 by the *Traicté de l'employ des Saincts Pères* of the Hugonot Jean Daillé, see below, Chapter 5, Introduction, note 6).

appuyoient leur doute (pp. xxvi–xxxviii). Unlike Huet, Sommier's historical perspective is very limited, since he begins with Pyrrho (merely mentioning his "precursors") and ends with the definitive disappearance of Scepticism from the schools after Cicero, thanks to the revival of Platonism. After this there were no more declared sceptics or "if there are any more now, they have hidden themselves and still remain hidden" (*Histoire dogmatique*, pp. xxv–xxvi). Much more extensive is the treatment of Scepticism by the Swiss philosopher and mathematician Jean-Pierre de Crousaz in his *Examen du Pyrrhonisme ancien et moderne* (The Hague: P. de Hondt, 1733; 1737[2]), which contains numerous points of interest for the history of philosophy. In this voluminous folio work, directed mainly against Bayle but which also considers Huet's *Traité philosophique* (see below, para 2.2.5.), the author analyses among other things the causes which determined the establishment of Scepticism in ancient Greece and gives a detailed account of the writings of Sextus Empiricus. At the beginning of his work, de Crousaz imagines summarising for a *philosophe judicieux* who has come from India, and who has never heard of Pyrrhonism, the results obtained by the sciences in Europe and in this context he sketches a *Sommaire de l'histoire philosophique* from the Greeks up to Malebranche and the mystic Pierre Poiret († 1719).

Moving on to works of a general nature, it is important to mention the *Bibliothèque des philosophes et des sçavans, tant anciens que modernes, avec les merveilles de la nature, où l'on voit leurs opinions sur toutes sortes de matières physiques, comme aussi tous les systèmes qu'ils ont pu imaginer jusqu'à present sur l'univers, et leurs plus belles sentences sur la morale; et enfin les nouvelles découvertes que les astronomes ont faites dans les cieux* (Paris: A. Cailleau, 1723–1734), 3 vols, 8°, by Hubert Gautier, "architecte, ingenieur et inspecteur des grands chemins, ponts et chaussées du Royaume". In this populist work (written by an amateur intellectual who, like Deslandes, came from the technical and administrative professions), the material is taken from reviews and dictionaries of the period and is arranged in alphabetical order; it is chosen according to very broad criteria and devotes much space to *remarques curieuses*. The work – which begins with a *Préambule de la philosophie, et des philosophes en général* – was reviewed in the *Acta philosophorum* and was also noted by Brucker, who criticised it for its superficial erudition. A general history of cosmogony and astronomy is contained in tome II, pp. 77–324, of Noël Pluche's (pseudonym of Antoine Pluche) *Histoire du ciel, considéré selon les idées des poëtes, des philosophes, et de Moïse, où l'on fait voire: 1. L'origine du ciel poëtique, 2. La méprise des philosophes sur la fabrique du ciel et de la terre, 3. La conformité de l'expérience avec la seule physique de Moïse* (Paris: V.ve Estienne, 1739), 2 vols, 12°, which enjoyed great success. Beginning with Caos, Pluche dwells at length on the physical and astronomical doctrines of Aristotle, Epicurus, Gassendi, Descartes, and Newton. The second volume of the *Histoire de la philosophie hermétique, accompagnée d'un catalogue raisonné des écrivains de cette science* (Paris: Coustelier, 1742), 3 vols, 12°, by the abbé Nicolas Lengley du Fresnoy, on the other hand, contains a history of alchemy from Arnald of Villanova onwards; in the *Préface* (p. iv), he presents his work as a "the precursor to a larger work" entitled *Histoire de la philosophie, des philosophes, et de leurs*

opinions, which does not seem to have made it to the press, however. In the *Méthode pour étudier l'histoire* in fact he had already provided an essential bibliography on the history of philosophy, which is placed in the context of the *histoire des artes et des sciences* and which it is interesting to compare with the analogous indications given earlier by *père* Lamy (see above, Chapter 1, Introduction). The list includes, in order, Stanley, Diogenes Laertius, the life of Socrates by Xenophon, Ménage's *Historia mulierum philosopharum*, Gassendi's biography of Copernicus and Tycho Brahe, and Baillet's *Vie de M. Descartes*, as well as Melchior Adam's *Vitae* and the history of the Royal Society of London and the Paris *Académie des Sciences* (N. Lenglet du Fresnoy, *Méthode pour étudier l'histoire, avec un catalogue des principaux historiens, et des remarques critiques sur la bonté de leurs ouvrages, et sur le choix des meilleures éditions* (Paris: Cousteler, 1713), pp. 304–305). In this standard bibliography, which reflects the taste of the average reader, the prevalent interest is of a biographical nature, confirming what we have noted more than once, while what is missing is precisely an overall history of philosophy.

A word apart must be devoted to the history of Greek philosophy contained in the final volumes of Charles Rollin's *Histoire ancienne*, and this not for the work in itself – it too divided into a *Histoire des philosophes*, namely of the sects, and a *Histoire de la philosophie*, that is of the logical, moral, metaphysical, and physical doctrines – but because it is placed within a general treatment of Greek culture conceived as a *histoire de l'esprit humain*: "The history of the sciences and the arts", observes Rollin in the *Avant-Propos* of this section, "and of those who distinguished themselves because of some particular merit is, properly speaking, the history of the human spirit; which, in a certain sense, is in no way inferior to that of princes and heroes, which current opinion places at a higher level of greatness and glory" (Ch. Rollin, *Histoire ancienne des Egyptiens, des Carthaginois, des Assyriens, des Babyloniens, des Medes et des Perses, des Macédoniens, des Grecs*, Nouvelle édition (Paris: Estienne, 1769–1772 [first ed.: Paris 1731–1738]), X, p. 397; the *Histoire des philosophes* takes up pages 439–562 of tome XII; the *Histoire de la philosophie* covers the following pages 563–654 and pp. 1–77 of tome XIII). If we bear in mind that in 1733 Saint-Aubin's *Traité de l'opinion ou Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de l'esprit humain* also came out, we can see here outlined that theme of the *histoire de l'esprit humain* which occupies an important place in the methodological reflection and historiographical practice of André-François Boureau-Deslandes.

Bibliographical Note

On the cultural background (besides many of the works quoted in Chapter 1 and in the section on Bayle): I.O. Wade, *The Clandestine Organisation and Diffusion of Philosophical Ideas in France from 1700 to 1750* (Princeton, 1938); P. Hazard, *La pensée européenne au XVIIIe siècle. De Montesquieu à Lessing* (Paris, 1946); S. Bertelli, "La crisi dello scetticismo e il rapporto erudizione-scienza agli inizi del secolo XVIII", *Società*, XI (1955), pp. 435–456; E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of*

Enlightenment (Boston, 1955); A.R. Desautels, *Les "Mémoires de Trévoux" et le mouvement des idées au XVIIIe siècle, 1701–1734* (Rome, 1956); H. Vyverberg, *Historical Pessimism in the French Enlightenment* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958); L.G. Crocker, *An Age of Crisis. Man and World in Eighteenth Century French Thought* (Baltimore, 1959); R. Mauzi, *L'idée du bonheur dans la littérature et la pensée française au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1960); F. Valjavec, *Geschichte der abendländischen Aufklärung* (Vienna and Munich, 1961); J. Ehrard, *L'idée de nature en France dans la première moitié du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1963; 1994[2]); F. Furet, *Livre et société dans la France au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris and The Hague, 1965–1970); A. Adam, *Le mouvement philosophique dans la première moitié du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1967); *Histoire littéraire de la France*, III. *De 1715 à 1789*, ed. M. Duchet (Paris, 1969); A. Roger, *Les sciences de la vie dans la pensée française du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1971); *Le matérialisme au XVIIIe siècle et la littérature clandestine*, ed. O. Bloch (Paris, 1982); U. Ricken, *Sprache, Anthropologie, Philosophie in der französischen Aufklärung* (Berlin, 1984); *Spinoza au XVIIIe siècle*, pref. O. Bloch (Paris, 1990); A. McKenna, *De Pascal à Voltaire. Le rôle des "Pensées" de Pascal dans l'histoire des idées entre 1670 et 1734* (Oxford, 1990); J. Yolton, *Locke and French Materialism* (Oxford, 1991); P. Casini, *Scienza, utopia e progresso. Profilo dell'Illuminismo* (Rome, 1994); H. Jaumann, *Critica. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Literaturkritik zwischen Quintilian und Thomasius* (Leiden, 1995); *Scepticism in the Enlightenment*, eds. R. Popkin, E. de Olaso, G. Tonelli (Dordrecht, 1997); J. Schøsler, *John Locke et les philosophes français. La critique des idées innées en France au XVIIIe siècle* (Oxford, 1997); M. Fumaroli, *Quand l'Europe parlait français* (Paris, 2001); J.I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment. Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650–1750* (Oxford, 2001) Id., *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity and Emancipation of Man, 1670–1752* (Oxford, 2006); *Du genre libertin au XVIIIe siècle*, eds. J.-F. Perrin and Ph. Stewart (Paris, 2004); *Un siècle de deux cent ans? Les XVIIe et XVIIIe sècles, continuité et discontinuité*, eds. J. Dagen and Ph. Roger (Paris, 2004); *Philosophes sans Dieu. Textes athées clandestins du XVIIIe siècle*, ed. G.L. Mori (Paris, 2005); R. Minuti, *Orientalismo e idee di tolleranza nella cultura francese del primo '700* (Florence, 2006); F. Moureau, *La plume et le plomb. Espaces de l'imprimé e du manuscrit au siècle des Lumières* (Paris, 2006); Chr. Zwink, *Imagination und Repräsentation. Die theoretische Formierung der Historiographie im späten 17. und frühen 18. Jahrhundert in Frankreich* (Tübingen, 2006); *Espaces de la controverse au seuil des Lumières (1680–1715)*, eds. L. Burnand and A. Paschoud (Paris, 2010).

Repertories: A. Cioranescu, *Bibliographie de la littérature française du Dix-huitième siècle* (Paris, 1969), 3 vols; J. Sgard, *Le "Pour et le Contre" de Prévost. Introduction, tables et index* (Paris, 1969).

On philosophical historiography: M. Schiavone, "La letteratura plotiniana dal Bayle fino al Galluppi", *Rivista di filosofia neoscolastica*, XLIV (1952), pp. 45–76; Bréhier, *The History of Philosophy. The Hellenic Age*, "Introduction", pp. 15–18; E. Garin, "La storia 'critica' della filosofia nel Settecento", in Id., *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo* (Pisa, 1970 [Firenze, 1993[2]]), pp. 241–284; Braun, pp. 104–107 and

141–144; Del Torre, *passim*; J. Dagen, *L'histoire de l'esprit humain dans la pensée française de Fontenelle à Condorcet* (Paris, 1977); G. Piaia, "Storia della filosofia e 'histoire de l'esprit humain' nella cultura francese del primo Settecento", in *Logica ed epistemologia, ed altri saggi* (Padua, 1979), pp. 195–223; Gueroult, 1, Chapters IX and XI; J.I. Israel, "Philosophy, History of Philosophy, and *l'Histoire de l'esprit humain.* A Historiographical Question and Problem for Philosophers", in *Teaching New Histories of Philosophy*, ed. J.B. Schneewind (Princeton, 2004), pp. 329–344.

On Colonna: JS, LXXX (1726), pp. 162–181; G. Costa, "Un collaboratore italiano del conte di Boulainvilliers: F.M.P. Colonna (1644–1726)", *Atti e Memorie dell'Accademia Toscana di Scienze e Lettere "La Colombaria"*, XXIX (1964), pp. 207–295; Spink, pp. 120–121, 128–132, 228. – On Mourgues: BCh, XXVII/2 (1713), pp. 424–462; JS, LIII (1713), pp. 639–655; LIV (1713), pp. 14–27; MT, XXIII (1713), pp. 258–287, 820–839. – On Baltus: JS, February, 1711, pp. 191–207, 243–255; MT, XIX (1711), pp. 582–607; NL, V (1717), pp. 337–338; XI(1720), pp. 815–837; AE, 1720, pp. 60–69; BF, XIII (1729), pp. 246–279. – On Beausobre: BR, XIII (1734), pp. 191–203, 405–434; NAE, 1736, pp. 389–395; BF, XXVI (1738), pp. 220–247. – On de Crousaz: BF, XVIII (1733), pp. 55–76; BR, X (1733), pp. 70–96; XI (1733), pp. 36–90; MT, 1734, pp. 932–950; BG, XVIII (1729), pp. 99–104; J. de La Harpe, *J.-P. de Crousaz (1663–1750) et le conflit des idées au siècle des lumières* (Los Angeles and Berkeley, 1955). – On Gautier: Heumann, III, pp. 450–467; Brucker, I, p. 37; Braun, p. 144. – On Pluche: BR, XXIV (1740), pp. 5–55, 355–376; NAE, 1744, pp. 340–348. – On du Fresnoy: JL, III (1714), pp. 337–363; BF, XXXVI (1743), pp. 95–105. – On Rollin: BR, XVIII (1737), pp. 182–183.

2.1 Pierre Bayle (1647–1706)

Oeuvres diverses
Dictionnaire historique et critique

2.1.1. The figure of Pierre Bayle (La Carla 1647–Rotterdam 1706) is so well-known that it is not necessary to dwell at length here on the facts concerning his life and works, save the necessary references given in the course of our discussion. The atypical nature of Bayle's works on the history of philosophy and the difficulty of systematically organizing his historiographical categories has led us moreover to modify slightly our usual approach, making an analysis of the *Dictionnaire* follow a chronological review of the elements and themes regarding the history of philosophy which are contained in his previous literary works. These are undoubtedly a minor aspect of Bayle's production, but they are of notable interest, however, as they allow us to reconstruct the background behind the articles on the history of philosophy in the *Dictionnaire*, and, at the same time, to clarify their relationship with the philosophical historiography of the seventeenth century. It is this contextualisation that makes it possible to evaluate fully Bayle's particular way of "writing the history of philosophy" and the contribution he made to the development of the "genre" in the eighteenth century.

2.1.2. *Bayle's interest in philosophical historiography in his works prior to the "Dictionnaire"*.

2.1.2.1. *The letter-dissertation to Minutoli (1673)* – The first work to be considered is a letter sent by Bayle to his friend in Geneva Vincent Minutoli on 31st January, 1673 (P. Bayle, *Oeuvres diverses* (The Hague: P. Busson, 1727–1731 [facs. repr. Hildesheim, 1964–1968]), IV, pp. 535–539). At the time Bayle was staying in the castle of Coppet, in Vaud, as the tutor of the three sons of count Friedrich von Dohna, and he sometimes travelled to the nearby Geneva to participate in a little academy of friends, which met every Thursday, as from December 1672. The themes dealt with in the first gatherings concerned the Babylonian empire, the history of the Persians, the heresies during the Reformation, and the philosophies of the Greeks. As he could not attend this last meeting Bayle sent Minutoli a dissertation on the subject, which was probably destined to be read during the gathering. It is a short profile of the history of Greek philosophy, which – besides being a mere academic exercise – is significant in several respects: it denotes in fact a specific interest in the history of philosophy and contains references to contemporary historiography; moreover this little work allows us to view Bayle's sceptical orientation during its formation and it anticipates by 20 years some of the typical procedures of the *Dictionnaire*. At the beginning of the dissertation Bayle expresses his interest in the chosen theme and gives a negative opinion on one of the most famous histories of philosophy of the time, Vossius' *De philosophia et philosophorum sectis*: "It seems to me that Vossius [. . .] does not satisfy his readers' curiosity as he should. Indeed, if I am not mistaken, there is nothing which we are more curious about on this subject than to know when the different sects formed, who their followers were, and with what means they spread around the world. Now, this is what Vossius has neglected to clarify for us, I do not know why" (*Oeuvres diverses*, IV, pp. 535b–536a).

After this preamble Bayle provides an outline of Greek philosophy, which is mostly devoted to the sect of the Pyrrhonians and the Pythagoreans. He begins by going back to the tripartite division of all philosophers into the Dogmatics (Aristotelians, Stoics, and Epicureans), the Academics, and the Pyrrhonians or Sceptics, pausing to analyse the motto of the latter "it is possible to doubt everything", and then pointing out that "the party of the Dogmatics was not the strongest" and that "the principal sects into which the school of Plato was divided were the enemies of dogma". Bayle mentioned Arcesilaus, Carneades, Lacydes, and above all Sextus Empiricus, observing that "in a word, we can put all the Academics on the side that is diametrically opposed to the affirmative philosophers, and when we have added the Sceptics, I know not who will win" (p. 536b). In a note to these passages the editor refers to the *Dictionnaire*, where Bayle "has explained in detail the principles of the Academics and the Pyrrhonians", and to Book I, Chapter XIV of Huet's *Traité philosophique de la faiblesse de l'esprit humain*. This latter reference is even more pertinent, since on the following page Bayle uses the same procedure as Huet, identifying a number of well-known ancient and modern writers with Pyrrhonism: ". . . not to mention these last few centuries, in which Michel de Montaigne and La Mothe Le Vayer have maintained it openly, and the

learned Monsieur Gassendi secretly, is it not known that Pherecydes, the father of all philosophers and the trunk from which all the various branches of this great body have grown, writing to his dear follower Thales just before he died, spoke to him in these terms: 'They [my books] do not contain any certainty that can satisfy me'?". Quoted next are a number of *sententiae* by Socrates, Democritus, and above all Cicero, whose eclecticism is reduced to Pyrrhonism ("Cicero was at least as fickle in the subject of philosophy as he was in politics; and he went from sect to sect, seeking some probability everywhere, just as he changed party in the affairs of State"). Even "the great St. Augustine was slightly touched by the Academic disease", while Horace (whom Bayle calls "my great author") was "a true frequenter of sects (*coureur de sectes*)". If he had been a philosopher rather than a poet his example would have been greatly effective, "since he did not act like those, who, having once been forced into a party, whichever party it is, stick to it for their entire lives [. . .] but like those who are content with a brief stay in those places where chance has sent them". Bayle's own adherence to this philosophical attitude is expressed unambiguously in several observations which provide us with an intellectual self-portrait, also valid for his more mature works: "In truth, we should not see it as strange that so many people gave themselves over to Pyrrhonism, since it is the most convenient thing in the world. You can dispute with impunity against anyone without fear of those arguments *ad hominem* which are sometimes so embarrassing. Do not be afraid of any retaliation, since, by not maintaining anything, you willingly abandon any opinion to all the sophisms and reasoning in the world. You are never obliged to place yourself on the offensive. In a word, you contest and criticize everything as much as you like without fearing the law of retaliation" (p. 537ab).

Horace the sceptic of the first *Epistle*, some of whose lines Bayle quotes, is contrasted ironically with Lucretius, who "limited himself to the sect of Epicurus and followed in his steps so well that he did not turn either right or left. He adores the leader of the sect [. . .] and if the good man had known that one day his hero would be denigrated in the world, I do not doubt that, in order to preserve his honour, he would have imagined some oracle damning those who failed to pay him respect" (p. 538a). Bayle moves on next to the Pythagoreans, whom he judges positively, in contrast to his previous stand against the dogmatic philosophies. It is a first example of that taste for overthrowing his position which often manifests itself in the *Dictionnaire* and which makes it impossible to give a precise definition of Bayle's speculative orientation: "Will you not grant me that they [the Pythagoreans] were far from the independence of a Cicero; they, who did not believe that leaving the sect of Pythagoras was living, which was why they held the funeral of those who abandoned it; they again who, to believe in the most illogical things only needed an *autos epha*? You can say what you like: I will always admire this great veneration they had for their master, and the perfect union that reigned among them". Bayle goes on to tell the story of Philolaus and Lysis, as an example of the friendship that linked the followers of Pythagoras; he denounces the error of Ovid who made Numa Pompilius a contemporary of Pythagoras, and speaks briefly of the adventures of Pythagoras and his most well-known followers; among these his daughter

Damo is mentioned in particular and compared with the learned and beautiful Arete (daughter of Aristippus), who leads Bayle to indulge in several *légères* digressions.[2]

The last part of the dissertation is developed according to a procedure that was to be come habitual in the *Dictionnaire*. Bayle omits Platonism and Aristotelianism, referring to the recent, "excellent work" by Rapin, and instead makes several *remarques* on Plato's ideal republic, in which we can see his lucid *esprit critique*: "I will be content to point out the pleasant fantasy that the emperor Gallienus and the emperess Cornelia Salonina had in mind, to allow Plotinus to establish a government, the idea for which came from Plato's books on the Republic, in a city of Italy, which they gave to him as an experiment. This plan was far from being realised, as we can easily imagine. For I believe that in order to carry it out, it would be necessary to go to some part of the world where men are of a different species from those that we know. We would have to go to the Land of Romance, in which not only do their little palaces exceed the Alhambra and we see the most beautiful gardens and the most enchanting landscapes that can be imagined, but also where there are only well-made people with generous and liberal spirits, perfectly adorned with all the virtues imaginable. It is there that Plotinus could have put into practice the ideas of Plato and establish the Utopia of Thomas More, if it had existed in nature. But until we find the secret to make men so civilized that it would be difficult for a poet to make them any more perfect, everything leads us to suppose that this republic of Plato's is destined to remain an ideal" (p. 539ab).

This digression in the margin of Platonism develops into another, even more particular, revolving around the figure of Cato Uticensis, and equally ironic.[3] The

---

[2] "Qu'il faisoit beau, Monsieur, étudier en ce tems-là! Et que je m'imagine du plaisir à faire un cours de philosophie sous une charmante fille! Si on dit que la vertu, qui part d'un beau corps est plus agréable, [...] de combien croiez-vous que soit plus agréable une leçon, qui sort d'une belle bouche? Et ne m'accorderez-vous pas, que tout ce qu'il y a naturellement de rude dans le précepte, s'adouciroit s'il nous étoit dit par une *Professeuse*, dont nous admirerions la beauté?" (*Oeuvres diverses*, IV, p. 539a; in a note the editor refers to the article *André (Jean), rem*. C of the *Dictionnaire*, in which there is another example of an illustrious *professeuse*: Novella, daughter of the Bolognese Canonist Giovanni d'Andrea. On Bayle's admiration of learned women cf. Labrousse, I, pp. 113–114; II, p. 78 note 31. Both Damo and Arete, and Novella are present in Ménage's *Historia mulierum philosopharum*).

[3] *Oeuvres diverses*, IV, p. 539: "Que je m'imagine de contentement pour Caton, s'il avoit pû gouverner la République que Plotin auroit établie! Je crois qu'il y auroit bien fait ses choux gras : lui, qui sans considérer la corruption de Rome, y opinoit toujours comme s'il eût vecu dans la République Platonicienne. [...] Il concevoit les choses avec une générosité si pure et avec une idée si haute, qu'elles n'étoient nullement à l'usage du monde. Et de là vient, qu'avec toute sa vertu, il nuisoit souvent aux affaires, ne prenant pas la peine d'accomoder ses Idées générales et ses Axiomes universels aux circonstances particulières qui se présentoient tous les jours. C'est pourtant ce qu'il ne falloit pas oublier. Car c'est toute autre chose de se promener parmi de belles Maximes et de belles Notions, et d'en faire application au train ordinaire du monde. Ces belles Maximes sont comme la suprême Région, qui est exempte d'orages et de tempêtes; mais leur application est comme ce bas Elément, où il tonne, il grêle, il pleut; et si on n'allonge, si on n'accourcit la Règle selon l'exigence des cas, on ne fait que gâter la besogne".

discussion ends with a singular piece of self-criticism on the part of Bayle, who openly recognises the "defects" of his means of proceeding (the same that we find in the *Dictionnaire*!) and makes a significant reference to Montaigne's style: "I will end, dearest Sir, by asking you to forgive my long-windedness, but above all the fact that I have allowed myself so often to wander away from my subject [. . .] I had begun this letter with the intention of speaking a little in an ordered way of the Greek philosophers. But when I sat down to re-read it, I found that I had only spoken of them at intervals (*à bâtons rompus*). This derives without doubt from a very bad principle, and I find from day to day that it is easy for me to slip into Montaigne's error, which is to 'know sometimes what I say, but never what I am going to say'. The bad thing is that there is more than Montaigne here, namely a hundred other imperfections which make unbearable that which the knowledge and the spirit of Montaigne allow us easily to excuse" (p. 539b).

2.1.2.2. *Système abrégé de philosophie* – His scrupulous teaching of philosophy at the Academy of Sedan from 1675–1681 allowed Bayle to deepen his philosophical preparation and to consult numerous textbooks then in use in the schools, among which Du Hamel's *Philosophia vetus et nova* and Villemandy's *Manuductio*. His first work on philosophy was written for didactic purposes, in Sedan in the autumn of 1677, and was successively re-worked and only published in 1731, accompanied by a French translation: *Institutio brevis et accurata totius philosophiae, in quatuor praecipuas partes distincta, logicam, ethicam, physicam et metaphysicam, in usum studiosae iuventutis* or *Système abrégé de philosophie* [. . .] *à l'usage des étudiants*, in *Oeuvres diverses*, IV, pp. 201–520. It is a textbook in which an account of the Peripatetic doctrines then taught in the schools is accompanied by the doctrines of the "new philosophers". Scholars unanimously attribute little value to this scholastic text, which is nevertheless worth mentioning because it allows us to establish a relationship between the author of the *Dictionnaire* and philosophy textbooks, which precisely at that time were beginning to devote space to historical aspects too.

It must be said immediately that, unlike Villemandy, Bayle makes no *excursus* into the history of philosophy in the *Discours préliminaire* placed at the beginning of the *Système abrégé*, which is devoted uniquely to the definition of philosophy and its division. It is however interesting to note how in physics (which takes up most of the work) Bayle frequently adds to his theoretical discussion reviews of the opinions of the ancient and modern philosophers, according to a procedure in vogue in those textbooks which were most open to the doctrines of the *recentiores*. In particular Bayle has a strictly historical take on the question of *continuum*, which he is unable to resolve on a theoretical level: "Here we have come to perhaps the most difficult question in physics, namely, whether *continuum* is composed of infinitely divisible parts, mathematical points, or corpuscles extended and indivisible because of their solidity. Whichever sect you embrace, there are irresolvable and inconceivable difficulties. Let us examine in the meantime what is said on each side, and let us try at least to know from a historical point of view (*saltem historice sciamus*; *tâchons au moins de savoir historiquement*) what the philosophers think, since the extreme weakness of the human mind prevents us from discovering what we must

think. We will therefore reduce the opinions of the philosophers on the composition of *continuum* to three principles . . . [namely that of Zeno of Elea, the Atomists, and the Peripatetics]" (*Oeuvres diverses*, IV, pp. 292–303). The words *saltem historice sciamus* are also stressed by Labrousse, in the context of the evolution in Bayle of the relationship between an interest of a historical and erudite nature and one strictly philosophical. Labrousse notes that this phrase "could be an echo of Nicole (who in one of his *Essais de morale* entitled *De la foiblesse de l'esprit humain*, writes: 'not able to find the truth, [men] are content to know the opinions of those who have looked for it')", and she adds that "admitting that he was inspired by it, Bayle removes the tone of accusation from this phrase" (Labrousse, II, pp. 37–38 and note 131). The comparison between these two thinkers also has an interesting implication from the point of view of the history of philosophy: the positive nature which the "Cartesian" Bayle grants to historical knowledge marks an end in fact to that devaluation of the history of human thought which, at the time the *Système abrégé* was written, had found its most radical expression in Malebranche, but which also appears in the words of Nicole.

2.1.2.3. *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* – After the closure of the Academy of Sedan (1681) Bayle began teaching philosophy again (together this time with that of history) at the *École Illustre* of Rotterdam. In the Spring of 1684 he was offered the chair of philosophy at the University of Franeker, but he turned it down and worked instead on the editorial board of the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, in which he could give vent to his genial talent as a literary journalist much better than he could in an academic routine. In the 3 years in which he was editor of the *Nouvelles* (March 1684–February 1687) Bayle reviewed – besides Villemandy's *Manuductio* – another two works on the history of philosophy which appeared in that period, the *De magisterio antiquorum philosophorum* by the Italian Leonardo Cozzando and Thomassin's *La méthode d'étudier la philosophie*. The review of Cozzando is particularly interesting because, before moving on to analyse the work (see above, Chapter 4, para 4.2.5), Bayle provides a general opinion on studies of the history of philosophy: "Many people had written in Antiquity on the history of the sects, and that of the succession of professors, and the lives of the philosophers, as we can see in the catalogue [. . .] that this author [Cozzando] once published, and in the book by Jonsius, *De scriptoribus historiae philosophiae*. [. . .] But hardly anything of all these works remains, so that those who have tried to build up a body of history regarding these themes have had to collect a infinite number of remains spread around here and there. Vossius [who is now judged positively, unlike in the 1673 dissertation] has made a good collection of this material and it is much more methodical than that of Hornius. What M. Gassendi presents to us in his *Prolegomena* is well digested. *Père* Rapin's *Reflections* on philosophy and his *Parallel of Plato and Aristotle* are a well-chosen and abundant whole" (NRL, June, 1685, art. IV, in *Oeuvres diverses*, I, p. 307). This review can be compared with a number of opinions on the genre of biography (entitled *Sécheresse des recueils historiques des Anciens sur leurs auteurs*) which Bayle adds to a review of a translation of the *Idylls* of Bion and Moschus. He uses the lack of biographical data on

these two poets as an opportunity to shift his discourse to the biographies of the philosophers and calls our attention to the unedited work by a writer specified only as "Menar", judged to be superior even to the *Lives* of Laertius: "If we had all the books of antiquity, we would without doubt find more material on the life of the ancient writers, but I very much doubt that we will be able to find enough to write stories as long as those that have been written for the modern authors. We must by necessity recognise that once many more things that concerned famous men were omitted than are today; since we note that Diogenes Laertius, who lived before the destruction of the libraries and the barbarian invasions, who was such a diligent compiler, found but little to say on most of the great philosophers of Antiquity. I must recognise that he has not sought out all that could be found, and I am easily persuaded that the manuscript which was presented to the illustrious Mademoiselle de Scudéry contains a hundred details that are not in Diogenes Laertius. She quoted this manuscript in the last conversation of her *Morale du monde*, as being written by Monsieur Menar [= Gilles Ménage?], 'a very hard-working man of study and of exquisite knowledge, who has collected everything that is curious about the lives of the ancient philosophers' " (NRL, September, 1686, art. I, in *Oeuvres diverses*, I, p. 633).

The *Nouvelles* are not lacking in overall judgements on ancient and modern philosophy, which can be translated into historiographical positions. The review of Robert Boyle's *De specificorum remediorum cum corpuscolari philosophia concordia* (London, 1686) opens with some *Réflexions sur la nature de la philosophie moderne*, in which Bayle resolutely sides with the *nouveaux philosophes* and their method: "Since they have given the world a taste of the mechanical principles of philosophy, many people of good sense have conceived a great deal of scorn for the method of our ancestors, who properly speaking simply said to the public in mysterious and magnificent terms that which the simplest of women already knew, that there is no phenomenon in nature, however strange it may seem, for which there is not a cause" (NRL, October, 1686, art. VI, in *Oeuvres diverses*, I, p. 665). It is well known that since his period in Geneva (1670–1674) Bayle had been a partisan for the *nouveaux philosophes*. He remains balanced, however, and refuses to make a general condemnation of the ancients without the possibility of appeal, since his scepticism (which transpires from behind his very adherence to Cartesianism) prevents him from taking dogmatic and exclusivist positions on a speculative or a historical plane. Just before the Academy of Sedan was closed, he confessed to his brother Jacob that he looked on Cartesianism "simply as an ingenious hypothesis which can serve to explain certain natural effects, but, for the rest, I am so un-obstinate (*entêté*) that I would not risk a single thing to maintain that nature is regulated and governed according to those principles. The more I study philosophy, the more uncertainty I find: the difference between the sects is merely reduced to some probability more or less; there has not been one yet which has reached its aim and, as far as it seems, will ever reach it, so great are the profundities of God in the works of nature as in those of grace. Thus you can say [. . .] that I am a philosopher *sans entêtement* who looks on Aristotle, Epicurus, and Descartes as inventors of conjectures which follow on from one another or are abandoned according to whether we wish to give

our spirit one *amusement* rather than another" (from a letter dated 29th May, 1681, in *Oeuvres diverses*, 2nd ed., The Hague, 1737, I/I, p. 126; on the tenor of this letter cf. Labrousse, II, pp. 41–44, where Bayle is defined as a "*minor* Cartesian", who tends eclectically towards the doctrines of the moderns in general).

2.1.3. *The "critical history of the philosophers" in the "Dictionnaire*"

2.1.3.1. Removed from teaching in 1693 following an accusation of atheism by his colleague Pierre Jurieu, Bayle devoted almost all the rest of his life to the writing and the enlarging of the *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, which came out in Rotterdam in 1697–1698, in 2 vols, published by Reinier Leers, and reprinted there in 1702 (in 3 vols) with numerous additions and corrections. Successive editions: Rotterdam [Geneva], 1715; Rotterdam, 1720; Amsterdam and Leyde, 1730, ed. by Pierre des Maizeaux; Amsterdam [Trévoux], 1734; Basle, 1738; Amsterdam-Leyde-The Hague-Utrecht, 1740, 4 vols (facs. repr. Geneva, 1995); Basle, 1741; Leipzig, 1801–1804 (incomplete); Paris, 1820; Paris, 1830 (incomplete). English translations: London, 1709, 1734–1738, 5 vols (repr. New York and London, 1984); *Selections from Bayle's Dictionary* (Princeton, 1952; New York, 1969); *Historical and Critical Dictionary: Selections,* eds. R.H. Popkin and C. Brush (Indianapolis, 1991; London, 1997: the most comprehensive English edition available); *A Historical and Critical Dictionary: Selected and Abridged from the Great Work of Pierre Bayle* (Kila [MO], 2009). German translation: Leipzig, 1741–1744, by Johann Christoph Gottsched. Here we have used the 1740 edition in 4 volumes; in the quotations, the title of the *article* and the letter of the *remarque*, if present, are immediately followed by the number of the volume in Roman numerals and the page, omitting the abbreviation *Dictionnaire*.

2.1.3.2. Bayle's monumental work was preceded by the *Projet et fragmens d'un Dictionnaire critique* (Rotterdam: R. Leers, 1692), with which Bayle intended to sound out the taste of the public and the reaction of the most qualified cultural circles, before going ahead with an editorial initiative of vast proportions. Even if the definitive form of the *Dictionnaire* does not correspond to that outlined in the *Projet*, this programmatic work must be considered because it gives us some useful indications for placing the *Dictionnaire* with respect to the genre of the history of philosophy and for understanding Bayle's concept of historiographical work. "I had the idea", declares Bayle at the beginning of the *Projet*, "of compiling the biggest collection that I could of the errors that are found in dictionaries, and of not limiting myself to that space, however vast it may be, but also of carrying out forays into all sort of writers, when the opportunity presented itself. [. . .] Would it not be desirable for there to be in the world a critical dictionary to which we could turn to check whether what is found in other dictionaries and in all sorts of other books is true? It would be the yardstick of other books, and you know a reasonably refined person who would not fail to call the work in question 'the insurance company of the *République des Lettres*'" (*Dissertation qui fut imprimée au devant de quelques Essais ou Fragmens de cet ouvrage l'an MDCXCII, sous le titre de Projet d'un Dictionnaire critique* [. . .], in *Dictionnaire*, IV, pp. 606 and 608).

In the preface to the first edition of the *Dictionnaire*, Bayle mentions his first plan and stresses that his "principal intention had been to point out the errors of M. Moréri and all the other dictionaries which are similar to his" (*Dictionnaire*, I, p. ii). This design also operates in the *nouvelle économie* taken on by the work, and Labrousse observes that the *Dictionnaire historique et critique* could almost have been entitled *Critiques particulières au Dictionnaire historique de M. Moréri* (Labrousse, I, p. 235). Bayle's work therefore is a sort of "dictionary of a dictionary" whose first term of reference is a work of the same genre, *Le grand dictionnaire historique, ou le mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane* by Louis Moréri, which came out in Lyons in 1674 and was reprinted more than once with additions and corrections up until 1759 (the sixth edition in particular [Amsterdam, 1691], was edited by Jean Le Clerc). The articles on the history of philosophy in Bayle's *Dictionnaire* – which, once removed from the alphabetical mêlée in which they are submerged, are akin to the genre of the "lives of the philosophers" – are therefore part of a work which is in a genre of its own, which, like the genre of polyhistory, cannot be identified *tout court* with *Historia philosophica*. This is the reason for Bayle's atypical nature as a writer of a "general history of philosophy". On the other hand, in the passages from the *Projet* quoted above, Bayle himself declares that he wants to examine many other works; in effect, to remain in the context of the history of philosophy, he is well aware of the specialist literature, both ancient and modern, and links himself to it in order both to extract information from it and to subject it to detailed critical observations, either with the mediation of Moréri or directly. From this point of view it becomes legitimate to "cut out" the articles on the history of philosophy from the *Dictionnaire* (as several eighteenth-century writers did in fact do) and consider them as a general history of philosophy.

In the final pages of the *Projet* Bayle claims the validity and the autonomy of historical knowledge, attributing truths of fact with their own degree of certainty, greater than that of truths of a mathematical nature. We should recall the essential points of this outline of a historiographical theory, which marks the end of the Cartesian preclusion towards the world of history, and the extension to this world of history of the principle of evidence, now removed from its initial metaphysical and geometrical context and applied to all types of intellectual activity: "If you say to me that the most abstract theorems of algebra are very useful in life because they make the human mind more suitable to perfect certain arts, I will reply that scrupulous research into all the facts of history is capable of producing enormous good. [. . .] It will be objected perhaps that in mathematics even that which appears most abstract and fruitless has at least the advantage of leading us to indubitable truths, while historical discussions and research concerning human facts, besides leaving us in the dark, are seeds of new discord. But he who affirms these things shows a great lack of prudence. I maintain that historical truths can be brought to a degree of certainty even more indubitable than that which is reached by geometric truths; let it be understood, as long as we consider these two types of truths according to the degree of certainty which is proper to them. Let me explain myself. In the disputes which arise among historians to know whether a certain prince ruled before or after another, both sides suppose that one fact has all the reality and the existence of which it is capable

outside our intellect, as long as it is not of the nature of those which are related by Ariosto or by other narrators of fantasy, and they take no account of the difficulties which the Pyrrhonians use to make us doubt whether the things that seem to us to exist really exist outside our own thought. Thus a historical fact reaches the highest degree of certainty which it is capable of as soon as we have verified its apparent existence: we do not require anything else for this sort of truth, and it would be to deny the principle common to those who dispute, and pass from one genus of things to another, to pretend that we prove not only that it seemed to the whole of Europe that a bloody battle was fought in Senef in 1674, but also that the objects are outside our intellect, as they appear to us. We are thus freed from tiresome sophisms which the Pyrrhonians call "means of *epoché*", and although we cannot reject historical Pyrrhonism as regards an infinite number of facts, it is certain that there are others which can be demonstrated with full certainty, in such a way that historical research is certainly not fruitless from this point of view" (*Projet*, in *Dictionnaire*, IV, p. 613; on its links with the *Logique de Port Royal* and Leibniz, see above, Chapter 1, Introduction and Chapter 6, Introduction, note 4; on the transposition of the Cartesian method to history cf. in particular Labrousse, II, pp. 39–68).

This general concept of historical knowledge is not accompanied by any specific theorizing of philosophical historiography, but it is significant that in this context Bayle also applies the distinction between truth of reason and truth of fact. In his article on Epicurus, after quoting a passage from Cicero's *De finibus* which stresses the bond of friendship which united the Epicureans, Bayle expresses himself in these terms: "Do not come here and say after this that people who deny providence and place their own pleasure as their ultimate aim are absolutely incapable of living in society, and that they are necessarily traitors, rasoners, thieves, etc. Are all these nice doctrines not confuted perhaps by that single passage from Cicero? Does *a truth of fact*, such as that which Cicero has brought to us, perhaps not overturn a hundred volumes of speculative reasoning?" (art. *Epicure*, *rem.* D, in *Dictionnaire*, II, p. 365a). It is indeed significant – to reconstruct the background of the *Dictionnaire* – that in this case Bayle merely goes back to what he had already clearly pointed out when reviewing the work by Jacques Parrain des Coutures, *La morale d'Épicure, avec des Réflexions*, which came out in Paris in 1685: Epicurus's "life and his writings thus affirmed the contrary, and it is from this that we must form our judgement of him; but instead of informing ourselves in this direct and legitimate way on this *question of fact*, we have thrown ourselves onto the *path of reasoning* and said: 'That man must have lived and taught his pupils like Sardanapalus, given that his general principles were impious'. What good is this reasoning in a question of fact? Would it not have been much better to consult exactly what remains for us of Epicurus, and the evidence that the most disinterested of writers has provided as to his probity? . . ." (NRL, January, 1686, art. IX, in *Oeuvres diverses*, I, p. 475a).

The history of philosophy therefore fully belongs to the field of truths and errors "of fact": this field includes, "besides the obvious facts of places, times, and actions, those other facts which are opinions verifiable by means of direct or indirect (in the case of the history of philosophy, or perhaps better, the history of philosophers) documentation; while in the case of what they taught in practice [it includes] quotations

of any provenance and degree of reliability" (Corsano, *Bayle*, *Leibniz e la storia*, p. 15). The hesitation with which Corsano refers to a "history of philosophy" in the *Dictionnaire* and his tendency to speak rather of a "history of philosophers" is entirely justified, since Bayle himself had intended to correct the "errors of fact concerning either the *particular history of great men* or the names of cities or other similar things" (*Projet*, in *Dictionnaire*, IV, p. 612). The structure of the dictionary with its alphabetical succession of biographies was particularly suited to satisfy Bayle's passionate interest (which as a young man had been fed on Plutarch) in the most minute details of the life of "great men" and in their *esprit* and *génie*, more than in the subjects which they deal with in their books (cf. Labrousse, II, pp. 5–6). It is this interest which led Bayle to reduce the context of history within the traditional biographical framework, divided into three histories: that of princes, the Church, and scholars. In him, "historical still represents a mere aggregate, an accumulation of unrelated details exhibiting no inner order. [. . .] A philosophical approach to history or a teleological interpretation of historical phenomena is far from Bayle's intention. His profound pessimism prevents him from finding anywhere in history evidence of a uniform plan or of a rational purpose. [. . .] Obviously, the more sharply we scrutinize the parts, the farther we are from a clear comprehension of the whole. Knowledge of details does not add up to an understanding of the whole; on the contrary, it destroys all hope of ever attaining such understanding" (Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Enlightenment*, pp. 203–204).

These general opinions are confirmed, as regards the field of the history of philosophy, in Labrousse's observations: "many of the articles concerning the Greek philosophers constitute true chapters in a history of ancient philosophy. Nevertheless, Bayle's analytical spirit leads him not only to study first of all the philosophers individually, without seeking to distinguish any doctrinal currents, but to attach himself, in each case, to a particular point of doctrine rather than to the whole" (Labrousse, II, p. 194 note 32). This "atomizing" of investigation, which corresponds to the absence of an organic vision of the whole or at least of a simple external framework, leads us to see in the *Dictionnaire* a "history of philosophers" rather than a "history of philosophy", the latter understood in the sense which was proper to it in that period. This condition to which Bayle subjects philosophical history is not to be considered however as a definitive and insuperable fact, since in the course of our discussion we will have the opportunity of noting, in that enormous, complex, and ambiguous "*ens per aggregationem* that is the *Dictionnaire*, in which the most detailed erudition alternates with the *matière de raisonnement*" (Labrousse, I, pp. 241–242), a number of tendencies towards a global interpretation of the doctrinal positions expressed by the various philosophers over the course of history.

For a further definition of the way in which Bayle conceives of "writing of the history of philosophy" we must go back to his initial plan of a review of the errors contained in the dictionaries and in other books, and we must also bear in mind that historical Pyrrhonism and that *désespoir de la vérité* which are always lying in ambush, even in the most lucid and exhaustive historical and critical analyses. By placing this general perspective into the context of the "history of philosophers",

we note that this latter comes to take on the more restricted connotations of a "history of the errors *regarding* the philosophers", that is to say, a systematic indication of the inaccuracies and *bévues* committed by ancient and modern historians of philosophy, regarding both their bio-bibliographical information and their criticism of the sources and correct reading of the texts. From this point of view, the articles in the *Dictionnaire* concerning the history of philosophy would constitute a sort of complement to Jonsius' *De scriptoribus historiae philosophiae*, which Bayle often uses in his quotations and his critical and historical discussions. On the other hand, the enlargement of his initial plan (which was to examine only the *faussetez de fait* and not the *faussetez philosophiques ou théologiques*)[4] and the large-scale introduction of "positive" facts on the life and doctrines of the philosophers and reflections which give ample room to the *matière de raisonnement*, mean that the "history of the errors *regarding* the philosophers" is accompanied by a "history of the errors *of* the philosophers", or at least a critical discussion of their doctrines carried out from well-defined if changeable theoretical positions, from Malebranchian Cartesianism to Scepticism. The categories with which this "criticism" of the philosophers is carried out will be listed later. From a theoretical point of view it must be noted that from this attitude it follows that the concept of an "objective" historiography tending to the certainty of truths of fact, as is set out in the *Projet*, is ultimately called into question by the "contaminating" presence of the discussion of the *faussetez philosophiques ou théologiques*: truths of fact, truths of reason, and truths of faith interweave and overlap in a rigorous investigation, under the disconcerting shadow of historical Pyrrhonism and philosophical and religious scepticism.

A final observation regards the general aims that Bayle had in view with his *chasse aux erreurs*, an activity to which he devoted himself almost with pleasure, chasing errors through texts and across centuries. Far from exhausting itself in a sterile *libido sciendi*, this activity assumes a moral value for Bayle, since "you cannot deny me that an infinite number of people may derive profit, morally speaking, from reading a great collection of rigorously verified historical errors, if only to become more cautious in judging their neighbour and more expert in avoiding the traps that satire and adulation lay for the poor reader at every turn. [. . .] With things as they are, you can see that even the smallest error will find its use here since merely by collecting such a great number of errors on every subject, we will teach man to know even better his own weakness and also the wonderful variety to which his errors are

[4] *Projet*, in *Dictionnaire*, IV, p. 614: "Ce dictionnaire ne regardant point les erreurs de droit, la partialité y seroit incomparablement plus inexcusable que dans les dictionnaires historiques. [. . .] Vous voyez par là [. . .] que les faussetez philosophiques ou théologiques n'entrent point dans le plan de mon ouvrage: il est pourtant vrai que les livres, où l'on en dispute, pourroient fournir une espèce de faussetez de fait, qui ne seroit pas peut-être la moins utile aux lecteur". The new approach, modifying the initial plan, is present in the *Préface* to the first edition of the *Dictionnaire*: "J'ai divisé ma composition en deux parties: l'une est purement historique, un narré succinct des faits; l'autre est un grand commentaire, un mélange de preuves et de discussions, où je fais entrer la censure de plusieurs fautes, et quelquefois même une tirade de réflexions philosophiques; en un mot, assez de variété pour pouvoir croire que par un endroit ou par un autre chaque espèce de lecteur trouvera ce qui l'accomode" (*Dictionnaire*, I, p. ii).

susceptible. It will make him more aware of the fact that he is a toy in the hands of malice and ignorance; that one takes him up when the other one leaves him; that if he is enlightened enough to recognise a lie, he is also wicked enough to use one against his own conscience, or that if he is not wicked enough to use the lie as it is, he is short-sighted enough not to see the truth" (*Projet*, in *Dictionnaire*, IV, p. 614). These declarations can also be applied to the history of philosophy, and imply an end to purely erudite research, and the aiming of research at strictly ethical ends which now substitute the traditional goals of an apologetic religious nature, present both in Catholics, and Protestants (we can thing of the Hugonot Villemandy's *Manuductio*). "I am very well aware", states Bayle in the first of the *Eclaircissements* written after the first edition, "that there exist people naïve enough to admit that a truth of fact must be suppressed by the historian whether it is such as to lessen the horror of atheism or the veneration due to religion in general. But I humbly implore them to allow me to continue to believe that God does not need such rhetorical tricks, and that if this can be admitted in a poem or a rhetorical passage, it does not follow that I should have to do the same in a historical dictionary" (*Dictionnaire*, IV, p. 628).

We can see a pertinent confirmation regarding the history of philosophy in Bayle's observations on the behaviour of Aelianus, who – when presented with the news that Diagoras had given the city of Mantinea excellent laws through his friend Nicodorus – refused to praise the latter so as not to praise the atheist Diagoras too: "Here is something remarkable. A frank, convinced atheist, who gives a State just laws like those of Solon and Lycurgus. On the other hand, here is a priest who affects himself to be a historian, and who suppresses the praise that Nicodorus had rightly deserved: that he suppresses it, I say, because glory would redound to Diagoras's advantage. It is not that Diagoras was not worthy of receiving this praise, but he denied the divinity, and consequently the historian could not be fair to him; the laws of history had to be broken, since this took from an atheist the good that was due to him. We would be less surprised at such a perverted morality if we did not consider that it is a pagan priest that states it. You poor things! You consider yourselves necessary to God, you believe that he has need of the political use you make of your insults and your praise. You would not believe this if you had faith in the oracles of Job (XIII, 7)" (art. *Diagoras*, *rem.* H, II, pp. 283–284). This anti-apologetical twist that Bayle gives to the motivations behind historical research (in whose ambit the history of the philosophers is placed) is a salient feature of that "crisis of European consciousness" which gave birth to the Enlightenment and, within it, a different conception of the history of philosophy.

2.1.3.3. The essential facts for a presentation of those contents of the *Dictionnaire* which concern the history of philosophy are presented by Labrousse in her lengthy monograph on Bayle. She informs us that "the articles devoted to philosophers represent 5% of the total (104 out of 2,044), but, since many of them are among the longest in the work, their length constitutes a sensibly higher percentage of the number of pages". To this regard it must be born in mind that in the 1740 edition the entries of the *Dictionnaire* take up a total of 3,033 folio pages and at times there are lengthy philosophical discussions in articles on people unconnected with the history

of philosophy, as in the case of the poet Ovid or the god Jupiter (art. *Ovide*, *rem.* G-H, which takes up a full 5 pages; art. *Jupiter*, *rem.* G). On the other hand Bayle's long digressions are mostly of a theoretical nature, even if they refer to writers and doctrines of the history of philosophy, so it is impossible to quantify the space given over to a discussion of the history of philosophy strictly speaking. Labrousse goes on to point out that the 104 articles on philosophers are thus distributed: 48 ancient philosophers, 13 medieval, 25 from the Renaissance, and 18 from the seventeenth century. "We give these figure approximately", she specifies, "because the boundaries are difficult to trace: we could, for example, enlarge the number of ancient 'philosophers' by counting as such the astronomers, or those of the sixteenth century if, as Bayle did, we included the humanists or certain professors or polemicists. As we know, it is not the intrinsic importance of an author that opens up the columns of the *Dictionnaire* (there is not article on Plato, for example); Bayle studies the authors who, according to him, have been neglected or overlooked by the historians who came before him. When he has nothing to say that cannot easily be found elsewhere, Bayle does not write an article (so there is no article on Descartes, since there was Baillet's very recent *Life*). Bayle's major work of interpretation concerns without doubt Antiquity. [. . .] Among the moderns, only the article *Spinoza* and the discussion of Leibniz's pre-established harmony, placed very bizarrely in the article *Rorarius*, represent an effort of interpretation comparable to that which Bayle made with regard to the ancients, and not simply a work of bio-bibliographical erudition" (Labrousse, II, pp. 194–195, note 32).

To integrate what we have just said we can note that the authors who receive most space are Spinoza (18 pages); Anaxagoras (13); Epicurus (12); Girolamo Rorario (11); Erasmus, Xenophanes, and Zeno of Elea (10); Chrysippus, Lucretius, and Origen (9); Cornelius Agrippa (8); Aristotle, Pythagoras, and G. Pereira (7); Abelard, Carneades, Charron, Democritus, Grotius, Pascal, and Pomponazzi (6). As for those who are not there, among the ancient philosophers, missing are (besides Plato): Anaximander, Anaximenes, Heraclitus, Parmenides, Protagoras, Socrates, and Speusippus. Among the medievals the following absences stand out: Avicenna, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and Ockham, while present are Abelard, Albert the Great, Peter of Ailly, Anselm of Aosta, Peter of Abano, Peter of Auriole, Roger Bacon, Berengar of Poitiers (Abelard's apologist), St. Bernard, Buridan, St. Peter Damian, Marsilius of Padua, Gregory of Rimini, John of Salisbury, and, among the Arabs, al-Kindi and Averroes. Besides these scholastic theologians Bayle also makes space for the Fathers, from Arnobius and Athenagoras to Augustine, John of Damascus, Gregory of Nazianzus, Nemesius of Emesa, and Origen. There is a very varied sample of renaissance "philosophers", which goes from the humanists Lorenzo Valla, Rudolph Agricola, Lefèvre d'Etaples, and Erasmus to the Paduan Aristotelians (Agostino Nifo, Alessandro and Francesco Piccolomini, Pomponazzi, Leonico Tomeo, and Jacopo Zabarella), to Andrea Cesalpino and the anti-Aristotelian Petrus Ramus; from Cornelius Agrippa and Girolamo Cardano to Bruno (who receives a page and a half); from Francesco Diacceto, follower and successor to Ficinus, to Galeazzo Florimonte (follower of Nifo), Machiavelli, Melanchthon, Justus Lipsius, Charron, Jacopo Aconcio, Juan de Mariana . . ..

Such a catalogue, it should be understood, is the work of this author and merely aims to highlight the variety of renaissance authors present in the *Dictionnaire*; it is a choice inspired by the concept current today of "renaissance philosopher", since some of these thinkers are not explicitly quoted by Bayle as "philosophers". For his part Bayle seems to feel the need to limit the concept of "philosopher", since he refuses to consider the poet Archelaus as such (the author of a work on the particular nature of things: cf. Diog. Laert., II, 17), as Moréri on the other hand had done: "It is without any basis, since a collector of the singular and marvellous properties of animals and metals etc. can certainly be called a naturalist or a historian of nature, but not a physicist or a philosopher, unless he has added to these facts the reason for the facts and a discussion of their causes" (art. *Archelaüs, philosophe*, *rem.* C, I, p. 219b). This does not mean that the philosopher must not be open to other fields of knowledge, and in particular that of history; significant here is the criticism made of the Cartesian Rohault for belonging to "those philosophers and those mathematicians who have a disposition only for natural science and Euclid, and who despise all the rest and do not even condescend to learn the facts regarding the history of their country" (art. *Guise, Henri*, *rem.* R, II, p. 657).

The philosophical panorama of the seventeenth century is also reflected in the *Dictionnaire,* through a variety of characters. Besides the great names (Spinoza, Kepler, Hobbes, Bacon [who receives barely half a page], Pascal, Maignan, Grotius, Cremonini, Bérigard…), we find some decidedly minor figures, such as the Dutch Cartesian Petrus ab Andlo (pseudonym of Reinier Van Mansvelt); the other Duchman David Gorlaeus (who, in his *Exercitationes philosophicae*, which appeared posthumously in 1620, distanced himself from Peripatetic doctrines and consequently enjoyed a certain notoriety because Regius made use of his ideas); the philosopher, physician, and astrologer David Herlicius († 1636); the Calvinist Bartholomäus Keckermann (teacher of philosophy in Danzig, who died in 1609, whom Villemandy had quoted among the contemporary eclectics); and Agostino Oregio, defined as a "great philosopher", who had been charged by cardinal Barberini (the future pope Urban VIII) to examine whether Aristotle had effectively taught the immortality of the soul. Among those who are missing, standing out are Gassendi and Galileo, as well as Descartes. It must be noted however that in the general economy of the *Dictionnaire* these gaps are filled at least in part by references spread throughout the work and recorded in the index of subjects at the end of the fourth and last tome, where characters such as Socrates, Plato, Gassendi, and Descartes receive respectively 19, 16, and 23 references, relating to biographical anecdotes or doctrinal discussions.

This "x-ray" of the contents of the *Dictionnaire* regarding the history of philosophy allows us to make an initial consideration of a general nature. In its choice of author-philosophers, the alphabetical ordering of the *Dictionnaire* oscillates between an extrinsic criterion (such as the fact that the writer has been omitted or treated insufficiently or erroneously in Moréri's dictionary or in specialized literature) and an absolutely intrinsic and elusive criterion, namely Bayle's historical and bibliographical curiosity and his speculative interest, which are unpredictable and asystematic. Just as it is possible to identify some of the speculative tendencies

which are developed and cross-referenced within that "fabulous palimpsest" that is the *Dictionnaire* (Corsano, *Bayle, Leibniz e la storia*, p. 11), so this sort of asystematicity elevated to a system reveals a very interesting tendency from the point of view of the history of philosophy. Bayle ends up in fact by overturning the traditional relationship between the "major" and the "minor" philosophers, giving full citizenship – on the historical erudite but also theoretical plane – to thinkers who were omitted from or only just mentioned in seventeenth-century histories of philosophy. It is significant that writers such as Anaxagoras, Xenophanes, Zeno of Elea, and Chrysippus are given more space than any other ancient thinker. Of the great trio of Plato, Aristotle, and Epicurus, which was usually predominant in historical treatments, only Epicurus maintains a position of the first order in the *Dictionnaire*. This aspect should certainly not be exaggerated, since the length of an article is sometimes due to digressions that have little or nothing to do with the subject of the article itself, but it is undeniable that individual philosophers (such as Anaxagoras, Diagoras, Dicearchus, Carneades …) and entire philosophical schools (such as the Eleatic) are rediscovered and presented to a vast public on the basis of a solid historical and philological apparatus. At the origins of this work of recovery is Bayle's interest in a number of philosophical positions usually neglected, and in those heretics or atheists who were usually condemned by historians and who find in the *Dictionnaire* on the other hand an attentive and precise interlocutor (on this last point cf. Labrousse, I, p. 237 note 9, where she observes that Bayle "thus took up the task already attempted by Naudé in his *Apologie*").

2.1.3.4. Given the structure of the *Dictionnaire*, periodization plays a minimal role in the "history of philosophers". Bayle limits himself in fact to accepting the division then current into four periods: the ancient age, the Middle Ages (the *siècles d'ignorance*), the Renaissance (which is linked to the flight of learned Byzantines from Constantinople), and the seventeenth century, which saw the rise of new philosophy. Bayle stresses in particular the difference between the characteristics of the seventeenth century and those of the sixteenth, showing a clear awareness of the intellectual transformations which had taken place in the two periods and contrasting the "philosophical" superiority of his own century with the primacy of the Renaissance in the field of philological criticism. In commenting on a prediction by Jacopo Aconcio that "we were about to move into an even more enlightened century than that in which we lived", he notes: "I believe that the 16th century has produced a greater number of learned men than the seventeenth century, and yet the former certainly did not have as many lights (*autant de lumières*) as the other. As long as the reign of criticism and philology lasted we saw many prodigies of erudition throughout Europe. The study of the new philosophy and that of the living languages have [however] introduced a different taste: we have ceased to see that vast and profound literary production, but to compensate there has spread throughout the Republic of Letters a certain more refined spirit, accompanied by a more penetrating discernment; men today are less learned but more capable. Aconcio was right therefore to see in the distance a century which would be a much more fearsome judge than his, for the logical ability which it would elaborate. It is not just me, indeed, who

affects in this way to be a judge of the superiority of our century: I merely conform to the opinion of finer scholars". Bayle goes on by quoting in full several of Rapin's considerations: "We can say in praise of our century that we know the nature of the ancient authors better and that we have penetrated their spirit more than those who have come before us. The difference between us and them is that in the last century more was made of erudition. [. . ..] It was the genius of the times, when nothing was more in vogue than great capacity and profound literary culture: scholars studied languages in depth, they applied themselves to reconstructing the text of the ancient writers with elaborate interpretations, quibbled over an ambiguity, gave some foundation to a conjecture to establish a correction; finally, they stuck to the literal sense of an author because they did not have the strength to rise up to the spirit, to know him in depth, as we do today, when we are more reasonable and less learned, and we appreciate more simple common sense than the ability to make tortuous subtleties" (art. *Aconce*, *rem.* D, I, p. 66; cf. Rapin, *La comparaison de Thucydide et de Tite Live, Avertissement*, in *Les Comparaisons*, pp. 175–176; on the presence of this theme in the preface of Horn's *Historia philosophica* (1655) cf. Rak, pp. 69–72; the importance of the considerations made by Bayle, in order to identify the transition from *ars critica* as philology and erudition to the *nouvelle critique* or "criticism as a discussion of the meaning and the spirit of books" has been pointed out by Garin, "La storia 'critica' ", pp. 258–262).

Bayle also senses an analogous evolution in orientation and cultural tastes in his own century, which preludes the establishment of a "critical" culture and, in particular, a "critical" historiography. In quoting a discussion which took place in Delft in 1697 on the theme "Whether they are any Jesuits as able today as there used to be", Bayle observes through an interlocutor that the cultural decline of the Company of Jesus is a "defect of the century", which is also found in the French universities and the "Protestant party". In reality, he adds, this alleged decline certainly does not mean "that the part of the seventeenth century in which we live is inferior to the other part or to the previous century. On the contrary, I believe that, when all is said and done, it must take prominence, and that it is the change in taste which is the only object of what you call the decline of erudition. The study of criticism has ceased; the mind has been cultivated much more than the memory, we have tried to think with finesse and express ourselves with elegance. This orientation does not lead to thick volumes, which impose themselves on the public and create great reputations, but in reality it gives birth to more lights, and an ability more valuable than the great knowledge of the grammarians or the philologists" (art. *Alegambe, Philippe*, *rem.* D, I, p. 156).

As regards the "classification" of the philosophers, the *Dictionnaire* has a potential criterion of division valid for the entire course of human thought. This is the distinction between *sceptics* and *dogmatics*, which Bayle had already stressed in his letter-dissertation to Minutoli and which he now takes up again with greater speculative and critical vigour. It finds an initial formulation in the *remarque* on the famous maxim of Chrysippus, who "wanted philosophers to pass lightly over the reasons favourable to the opposite party which were able to move and persuade the audience or the reader, and to imitate those who defend a case in court". "Note that

Antiquity", Bayle observes here, "had two types of philosophers: one was like the lawyers and the other like the examining magistrates in a trial. The former, in proving their opinions, hid the weak part of their own argument and the strong part of that of their adversaries as far as they could. The latter, namely the Sceptics or the Academics, faithfully presented the weak and the strong points of the two opposite parties without any form of impartiality. This distinction", Bayle goes on, relating what he says to his own world and giving it an autobiographical colouring, "has been seen very little among the Christians in the schools of philosophy and even less in the schools of theology. Religion does not tolerate the spirit of the Academics: it wants things to be denied or affirmed. It has no judges who are not at the same time also interested parties: there is an infinite number of writers who plead their case according to Chrysippus's maxim, that is to say, who carry out the simple function of the lawyer; but we hardly ever find any examining magistrates, because if someone relates without travesty and in good faith all the force of the opposite party, he renders himself hateful and suspect and runs the risk of being treated as an infamous prevaricator" (art. *Crysippe*, *rem.* G, II, p. 169).

The distinction between dogmatics and sceptics, which in the passage quoted above characterises the ancient philosophers, is later extended to all philosophers, and acquires a universal value thanks to its foundations of a psychological and temperamental order. Inspired by the accusation made against Melanchthon of tending towards Pyrrhonism, Bayle makes some more general considerations: "I think that the whole affair has been exaggerated, but I do not believe that Melanchthon was exempt from doubts and that there were certainly some arguments on which his soul did not say 'this is the way it is and it cannot be otherwise'. He had a sweet and peaceful temperament and possessed much genius, had read much and had a vast science. These are qualities of nature and acquired qualities whose combination is usually a sources of irresoluteness. A great genius supported by great knowledge never finds that only one side is wrong: he discovers something strong and something weak on each side, understands what is most specious in the objections of his adversaries, and what is least solid in his own arguments; he does all these things, I say, as long as he is not of a bilious temperament, because in this case he worries about his own party to such an extent that the lights [of his intellect] no longer serve him". Bayle makes some more reflections of this type, specifying that he is only dealing with the theme of the difference in temperament "philosophically", leaving aside the effects of Grace, and he goes back to the distinction between sceptics and dogmatics which Cicero had set out in his *Quaestiones Academicae*: the sceptics have some good qualities, which lead to great disadvantages however, while the dogmatics or "zealots" are preferable for the "interests of a sect" (art. *Melanchthon*, *rem.* I, III, pp. 372–373). Besides this criterion of division (which is taken from the sceptical tradition in which "naturality" is used to justify and legitimate a fundamental speculative choice) we can identify others, the first of which is "Spinozism", which depends even more exclusively on Bayle's theoretical positions without any mediation of a historical or psychological nature. It is preferable therefore to examine such "criteria" within the complex of the interpretative categories used by Bayle and the historiographical theories which arise from them .

2.1.3.5. A first aspect which catches our attention in the way in which Bayle approaches the history of philosophy is his recurrent tendency to relate the facts and doctrines of the past to the present, establishing analogies between philosophers who are distant from one another in time and space. This tendency reflects the "journalistic vocation" of a Bayle who "will never be able to detach himself from his own time and will always be ready to take his inspiration from the present moment for a subject to treat" (Cantelli, *Teologia*, p. 3). It also reflects the "analytical intelligence" and "anatomist's mentality" which lead him to stress the isolated to the detriment of the entire context, so that it becomes for him "deceptively easy to assimilate the new to what is already known, recent theories to ancient ones" (Labrousse, II, p. 134). The analogies made by Bayle regard both anecdotes and speculative positions. The legendary information on the hyperborean Scythian Abaris, who flew on an arrow, suggest to him, for example, a long digression on the case of his contemporary Jacques Aymar and his alleged magic wand, which had enflamed public attention and was also to be remembered, almost half a century later, by Deslandes (art. *Abaris*, I, pp. 3–7; Deslandes, *Histoire critique*, III, p. 93; for other analogies between facts or attitudes belonging to different ages, see art. *Athenagoras*, *rem.* B-C, I, pp. 370–371; *Heracleotes*, *rem.* A, II, p. 744). An example of his typical "journalistic" modernising regards the fact that Plato did not quote Democritus in his writings (cf. Diog. Laert., III, 25). The explanation for this fact is taken by analogy from the considerations that Denis de Sallo had made in the *Journal des sçavans* regarding Pallavicino's *Istoria del concilio di Trento* (1656–1657): the author had shown himself to be less than shrewd because in his work he had continually quoted Paolo Sarpi, thus creating in his readers a great interest in his adversary. Baronio had behaved quite differently, since he had confuted the *centuriatores* of Magdeburg without ever mentioning them specifically, for fear of "exciting the curiosity of people and making them want to see a book the reading of which is always dangerous". "The problem that Baronio wished to avoid", comments Bayle, "is, I believe, the same that Plato wanted to ward off. This is where the cunning lies. Diogenes Laertius had no knowledge of tricks of literary warfare (*la Guerre des Auteurs*), since he did not stress this when speaking of Plato's conduct" (art. *Démocrite*, *rem.* Q, II, p. 274).

Besides the extrinsic comparisons (such as that between the Brahmans and the Carthusians, on the basis of their lifestyle), Bayle points out a whole series of affinities between the major doctrinal currents of his own time and the philosophers of the past. Thus he sees a similarity between the Quietists and the Indian Brahmans, then the Chinese sect of Foe Kiao, "spiritual Origenism", and Plotinus, whose ecstasy contains the "seeds of Quietism" (art. *Brachmanes*, *rem.* K, I, p. 653; *Spinoza*, *rem.* B, IV, p. 255; *Origène*, *rem.* I, III, p. 546; *Plotin*, *rem.* K, III, p. 760). Touching on the theories which Carneades used against Chrysippus – which maintained that Apollo "cannot predict future events, unless they depend on a necessary cause", in such a way as to deprive the god of all knowledge of contingent facts – Bayle makes a daring comparison with the theological controversies of his own time: "You see that the disputes of the Augustinians with the Jesuits and the *Remonstrantes* over the consequences of predestination had already taken

place among the ancient philosophers. You see that Carneades had already made life hard for the predestinationist theologists" (art. *Carnéade*, *rem.* L, II, p. 62). As for Chrysippus, "he set out a consideration in his treatise on providence that can be considered to be a very good sketch of one of the best principles that a great philosopher of the 17th century set out and clarified": namely the reply that Chrysippus gave to the question of whether providence had also produced the illnesses that afflict men, which is similar to that given by Malebranche in his *Recherche de la vérité* (art. *Chrysippe*, *rem.* N, II, p. 175).

We find another parallel with Malebranche regarding Democritus' theory that "the images of objects [. . .] are an emanation of God, and they are themselves a God, and that the idea presently in our soul is a God". "Is it a long way from this", remarks Bayle, "to say that our ideas are in God, as *père* Malebranche says, and that they cannot be a modification of a created spirit?". As for Democritus's other fundamental theory, "that there is nothing real besides atoms and vacuum, and that all the rest is merely opinion", Bayle observes that "it is what the Cartesians affirm today regarding the bodily qualities, colour, smell, sound, taste, hot, cold; these, they say, are none other than modifications of the soul" (art. *Démocrite*, II, p. 274). Cartesianism is evoked again when the physical theories of Diogenes of Apollonia and the Eucharistic doctrine of Pierre d'Ailly are mentioned (*Dictionnaire*, I, p. 117; II, p. 296). Bayle makes another interesting parallel between Aristotle and his commentators on one hand, and the Occasionalist Cartesians on the other: in touching on the problem of knowledge, on which so many ancient and modern philosophers had concentrated their efforts in vain, he observes that the theories of the Occasionalists who place in God the "efficient and immediate cause" of all our sensations and imaginations, passions and ideas, is none other than an "extension" of the theory of the agent intellect formulated by Alexander of Aphrodisia and criticised in his time by Du Plessis Mornay in *De la vérité de la religion chrétienne* (art. *Averroès*, *rem.* E and I, I, pp. 386–387).

If some of the analogies mentioned here have the flavour of a journalistic scoop, used by Bayle – who always had an eye to the tastes and the knowledge of the average reader – to liven up figures and themes which were remote in time, other analogies, such as that regarding Quietism and Occasionalism go beyond a simple desire to render his discussion topical. The interpretation of the philosophical doctrines of the past in the light of those of the present reveals a tendency to consider certain theories and structures of thought as phenomena which recur in different ages and thinkers or which are in any case present in Antiquity in embryonic form. This tendency emerges notably and emblematically in the interpretation of Spinozism as a constant factor in the historical development of thought, which views the theories of Baruch Spinoza not so much as an original system but as a re-flourishing, like a karst phenomenon, of an immanentist monism which affected a great number of thinkers in every time and place. "He was a systematic atheist", Bayle notes at the beginning of his very long article on Spinoza, "and adopted a completely new method, even if the bases of his doctrine are common to those of the doctrines of many other ancient and modern philosophers, European and Oriental". In the lengthy note to this passage, entitled "List of People who Shared Spinoza's

Sentiment", Bayle re-affirms this statement and defines the doctrinal essence of Spinozism: "I believe that Spinoza was the first to have reduced atheism to a system, giving it a coherent body of doctrine with a geometrical method; his opinions however are anything but new. We have long believed that the universe is nothing but a substance, and that God and the world are nothing but the same being". This preamble is followed by a review, taken from various and disparate sources, of writers and movements who identify God with matter: the Mohammedan sect of the Ehl el-Tahkik or "men of truth" and the "Zindichits", David of Dinant and his master Amalric of Bène, Alexander the Epicurean, and Strato of Lampsacus, whose opinion "comes infinitely closer to Spinozism than it does to the atomistic system".[5]

Bayle then moves on to the Stoics, observing that "the doctrine of the soul of the world, which was so widespread among the ancients and which constituted the principal part of the Stoics' system, also constitutes the basis of Spinoza's system. This would emerge even more clearly", he specifies, "if that ancient doctrine had been set out by writers who had also been mathematicians; but since the works which mention it were written according to the rhetorical method rather than the dogmatic one (while Spinoza used a rigorous method, avoiding that figurative style which so often confuses the exact ideas of a doctrinal system), it follows that we find numerous capital differences between his system and that of the soul of the world". Bayle also quotes a long passage from the philosopher and traveller François Bernier (the author of the *Abrégé de la philosophie de Gassendi*), from which it emerges "how Spinozism is none other than a particular way of interpreting a doctrine widely diffused in the Indies"; this is followed by another quotation, alleging that "Peter Abelard was accused of having said that all things are God and that God is all things" (art. *Spinoza*, and *rem.* A, IV, pp. 253–254). Further information on the Spinozists of the Orient is given in *remarque* B (devoted to the Chinese sect Foe Kiao) and in the article on Japan, to which Bayle refers (art. *Spinoza*, *rem.* B, IV, pp. 254–255; art. *Japon*, article and *rem.* D, II, pp. 831–832).

The most remarkable aspect of this interest in the historical precedents of Spinoza's thought is not however the vast review summarized above, but the frequent, unpredictable, and almost obsessive reference to Spinozism which runs through the *Dictionnaire* and which is like a Leitmotiv of the "history of philosophers". The disease of Spinozism is identified as far back as the most ancient philosophers, such as Thales and Anaximenes. The latter's principle of air is in fact understood as an "immanent cause, which produced in itself an infinity of endless effects. [. . .] Such a dogma was basically Spinozism, since by following this,

[5] Some of the philosophers listed here (Alexander the Epicurean, David of Dinant, Amalric, and also John Scotus Erigena) had been quoted in the *Theses philosophicae*, which according to Labrousse dates to 1680, namely to the end of the Sedan period. "Spinoza's mistake is not new", declares Bayle in this little work, which is clearly inspired by Cartesianism. He does not pause to confute this error, but, after having listed the ancient Spinozists and their theories, he limits himself to observing: "simply setting them out is enough to confute these bizarre fictions" (*Theses philosophicae*, in *Oeuvres diverses*, IV, p. 134; cf. Labrousse, II, pp. 140–141). This passages from the *Theses* allows us to retro-date Bayle's adversion to Spinozism by many years.

the God or eternal and necessary being of Anaximenes was the only substance, of which the sky and the earth, the animals etc. were nothing but modifications. Thales had perhaps had a similar opinion, he who had taught that water was the principle of all things" (art. *Jupiter*, *rem.* G, II, p. 904). In the same way as for Anaximenes, the system of Diogenes of Apollonia is also identified with Spinozism, as are the concepts of Parmenides, Melissus and Xenophanes. Bayle notes that "the author of the *Art de penser* pays greater honour to Parmenides and Melissus than they merit. He presents them as orthodox writers on the question of the origin of creatures, and yet they were just as impious as Spinoza, or almost so: they did not recognise any difference between the principle of which things are composed and the principle that produced them". As for Xenophanes, Bayle criticises the Jesuit Pierre Lescalopier, who in his commentary on Cicero's *De natura deorum* (Paris, 1668) had attributed him with a "reasonable position on the nature of God". In reality this sentiment is "an abominable profanity, a Spinozism even more dangerous than that which I confute in the article on Spinoza, since Spinoza's hypothesis carries with it its own antidote, thanks to the fickleness or continual corruptibility that he attributes to the Divine Nature, with regard to modalities. This corruptibility is revolting to common sense and horrifies both modest minds and great intellects; but immutability in all ways, which Xenophanes attributes to the infinite and eternal Being, is a dogma of the purest theology; it could therefore be more seductive in favour of the rest of the hypothesis " (art. *Diogène d'Apollonie*, *rem.* B, II, p. 296; *Xénophanes*, *rem.* B and L, IV, pp. 515–516, 524). The Roman Quintus Valerius Soranus is also identified with Spinozism, as is the spiritual Origenism of Plotinus himself: "what did Plotinus mean when he wrote two books to prove that 'unum et idem ubique totum simul adesse'? Was it not perhaps to teach that the being which is everywhere is a single and same thing? Spinoza does not ask any more" (art. *Soranus*, IV, pp. 241–242; *Origène*, *rem.* K, III, p. 546; *Plotin*, *rem.* D, III, p. 756; on the latter see Schiavone, *La letteratura plotiniana*, pp. 46–48, which stresses Bayle's role in initiating modern historiography on Plotinus).

Moving on to the Middle Ages we find the signs of Spinozism in the Muslim Abu Muslim and in William of Champeaux, against whom Abelard (quoted elsewhere as a Spinozist for having taken up Empedocles's theory) "vigorously disputed regarding the nature of universals, as to force him to give up his sentiment, which was fundamentally an undeveloped Spinozism". William of Champeaux's realistic doctrine on universals is compared with the Scotists with their *unitas formalis a parte rei*: "I say that Spinozism is merely an extension of this dogma", Bayle insists, "since, according to the followers of Scotus, universal Natures are indivisibly the same in each one of their individuals: the human nature of Peter is indivisibly the same as the human nature of Paul. On what basis do they say this? [This basis] is that the same attribute of man, which is suited to Peter, is also suited to Paul. This is precisely the illusion of the Spinozists …" (art. *Abumuslimus*, *rem.* A, I, p. 38 [cf. Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, pp. 638–639]; *Abélard*, article and *rem.* C, I, p. 19). Among Renaissance writers Andrea Cesalpino, though recognising the existence of Aristotle's motor intelligences, "reduced them all to a single substance; he also admitted angels or demons, but said that they were merely particles of God

united to a rarefied matter. What is more, he insisted that the soul of man and the soul of beasts were portions of the substance of God" (art. *Césalpin*, article and *rem.* C, II, p. 118). The last in this long series of Spinozists is Giordano Bruno, whose doctrines Bayle has a particularly harsh opinion of.[6] Referring to the *De la causa, principio et uno*, he points out that "his hypothesis is basically quite similar to Spinozism". Bruno and Spinoza are "unitary in the extreme; they only recognise a single substance in nature". Both ultimately fall into the same theoretical difficulties: "Please note an absurdity: he [Bruno] says it is not being that makes there be many things, but that this multitude consists of that which appears on the surface of substance. Will he please answer me this: do these appearances which strike our senses exist or not? If they exist, they are a being, and it is therefore through beings that there is a multitude of things. If they do not exist, it follows that nothing acts on us and is felt, which is absurd and impossible. We cannot get out of it unless we accept a contradiction. Spinozism is subject to these aporias" (art. *Brunus*, *rem.* D, I, pp. 680–681). An analysis of the motives behind Bayle's almost morbid interest in this proteiform and omnipresent monster that is Spinozism is beyond the scope of this work. We aim here to stress that in the *Dictionnaire* Spinozism becomes a true "paradigm of human thought" (Cantelli, *Teologia*, p. 231), transforming itself into a general category, both theoretical and historiographical, which can be applied to all historical periods and geographical areas. "For Bayle", observes Cantelli again, "there exist several exemplary metaphysical positions, which in their essential outlines are clearly defined right from the origins of philosophical reflection and which later reproduce themselves with numerous variants, preserving intact however their fundamental inspiration and always coming up against the same difficulties" (*Dizionario*, p. xix; cf. also Labrousse, II, p. 134).

Another speculative orientation which becomes a constant in the history of philosophy is Scepticism. Bayle does not make a point, as he does for Spinozism, of noting systematically all those thinkers who tend more or less directly towards scepticism; perhaps because, far from constituting an error to be denounced, they represent – as we have already said – a positive mental attitude more than a doctrine. Bayle's attention seems to be directed however towards identifying the genesis of scepticism in the earliest manifestations of Greek philosophy. Following Sextus

[6] "On peut faire deux remarques générales sur les idées de cet auteur: l'une est que ses principales doctrines sont mille fois plus obscures que tout ce que les sectateurs de Thomas d'Aquin ou de Jean Scot ont jamais dit de plus incompréhensible; car y-a-t-il rien d'aussi opposé aux notions de notre esprit que de soutenir qu'une étendue infinie est toute entière dans chaque point de l'espace, et qu'un nombre infini ne diffère point de l'unité? L'autre observation est qu'il se figure ridiculement que tout ce qu'il dit s'éloigne des hypothèses des péripatéticiens. C'est le sophisme *ignoratio elenchi*. Il n'y a entre eux et lui qu'une dispute de mots à l'égard de l'immutabilité ou de la destructibilité des choses. Ils n'ont jamais prétendu que la matière en tant que substance, en tant que sujet commun des générations et des corruptions, souffre le moindre changement. Mais ils soutiennent que la production et la destruction des formes suppose que le sujet qui les acquiert et qui les perd successivement n'est point immuable et inaltérable. Brunus ne sauroit nier cela qu'en prenant les mots dans un sens particulier; ce n'est donc qu'un malentendu, ce ne sont que des équivoques" (art. *Brunus*, *rem*. D, I, p. 680).

Empiricus he affirms that it was Democritus who provided "the Pyrrhonians with all that they said against the evidence of the senses: since besides the fact that he used to say that the truth was hidden at the bottom of a well, he held that there is nothing real except atoms and vacuum, and that all the rest is nothing but opinion" (art. *Démocrite*, II, p. 274; this theme is also used however for an analogy with Cartesianism). More complex and profound is the relationship established between Xenophanes and the Sceptics: "The whole Eleatic sect believed with him in the unity of all things and in their immutability: and perhaps I am not mistaken if I dare to say that this gives birth to the dogma the Sceptics are so proud of, [namely] that our senses deceive us and that we should not trust what they tell us. Indeed, since it has been objected against these philosophers that in the universe there is continual new generation, which requires that there be two principles, one active and the other passive, or at least that the single substance of nature be not immutable, they cannot find a better expedient against this difficulty than to deny that generation takes place". Xenophanes himself, trapped in the dilemmas into which his rigorous monism had led him, finally succumbed to the deepest scepticism, with results that Bayle judged to be "more contagious" than Spinozism itself. "That man, unable to remain in the place to which reason had led him, let himself fall down a precipice: he rebuked his reason, which had entangled him in nets that he could not break; he accused it of being unable to understand anything. Many others might throw themselves into similar excesses, if they did not have recourse to a greater aid than reason". Though defining the doctrines of Xenophanes as "vain sophisms", Bayle recognises the greatness of this thinker, a Spinozist and a Sceptic: "although true greatness of spirit and a solid power of reasoning do not allow one to succumb in this way, it is nevertheless true that a mediocre mind will never soar as high as Xenophanes, and will not fall like him". This apology for the founder of the Eleatic school is an opportunity for Bayle to defend all the sceptics, whose doubts do not depend on their *médiocrité d'esprit*. "They have arrived at the dogma of incomprehensibility not because they know nothing, but because they know things much better than most people do, even if they do not know them in the right way". It is in this context that Bayle declares that "Socrates, Zeno of Elea, Arcesilaus, Carneades, and similar enemies of certitude were amongst the most sublime geniuses of antiquity" (art. *Xénophanes*, *rem.* B and L, IV, pp. 516, 523–524).

It seems possible to deduce from the picture sketched out above that Bayle had a cyclical vision of the course of human thought, in which we can just catch the influence of the renaissance and libertine theme of the recurrence of spiritual attitudes. From this point of view there is a fundamental continuity between the ancient and the modern age, which was not even broken by the advent of Christianity, since Bayle points out on more than one occasion that "before the Gospel there were philosophers who understood the true path to perfection" and put Christ's teaching into practice even before it was announced (art. *Anaxagoras*, *rem.* A, I, p. 207; *Arcesilaus*, *rem.* I, I, p. 287; *Hermias*, *rem.* A, II, p. 755). This substantially static vision is accompanied however (due to one of the typical oscillations of the *Dictionnaire*, for which it would be vain to look for a single set of interpretative categories) by the affirmation of a radical diversity and discontinuity between ancient

and modern thought. What distinguishes these two forms of thought is the theory of creationism which was introduced by Christian revelation and which according to Bayle is the only way of fundamentally resolving the contradictions incurred by the Greek philosophers, who were bound by the idea of the eternity of matter. But the rise of Christianity did not mark the end of the ancient error *tout court*. It was only possible to overcome this error when the idea of creation was accepted in all its implications, giving rise on a philosophical plane to a rigorous distinction between matter and spirit, extended substance and thinking substance. Cartesian dualism therefore represents the most complete realization of Christianity from a philosophical point of view and the clearest contrast to the thought of the ancient Greeks, as well as that of Spinoza. It is opportune to follow the emergence and the configuring of this new speculative and historiographical category in Bayle's work, a category which is juxtaposed with those set out in the previous pages.

We find a significant confirmation of the centrality of creationism at the end of *remarque* L of the article on Xenophanes. Bayle concludes his reflections by noting that "the evidence of the principles of Xenophanes on the immutability of that which is eternal has all the degrees which are seen in the clearest notions of our minds, in such a way that – since it is indeed incontestable, for the things that happen within us, that there are changes – the best idea our reason can side with is to say that everything, except God, has a beginning. This is the dogma of creation, since pretending to explain the generations of nature by supposing many eternal principles, whose action and reaction diversifies that which would remain uniform if nothing external intervened, would mean avoiding one difficulty only to throw oneself into a greater one" (art. *Xénophanes*, *rem.* L, IV, p. 525). As for the connection between Christian creationism and Cartesian dualism, it is the inspiration for a lengthy reflection on the mythological figure of Jupiter: "For a long time I found what the pagans said about the origin of Jupiter so strange that the more I thought about it the more the thing seemed monstrous to me, and such in a word that it seemed impossible to me that any philosopher could have adopted it; but I finally understood that they managed to let themselves fall into this error because of I do not know what reasons, whose weakness it was not easy for them to discover. They certainly did not think the creation of anything was possible, and they did not admit substances completely distinct from extension. Now, once these two hypotheses have been posited, it is almost just as easy to imagine that refined matter could have become God as to believe that the soul of man is matter, as most philosophers held" (art. *Jupiter*, II, pp. 903–904).

In *remarque* G Bayle dwells on the principles elaborated by the pre-Socratics (which we have spoken of regarding Spinozism and which we will have occasion to return to later) and stresses the position of Anaxagoras: he "was the first to recognise a spirit distinct from the matter of the world, a pure spirit not mixed with bodies. [...] His hypothesis admitted an intelligence prior to the formation of the world: the other hypotheses merely had the world preceded by Chaos or Water, or Air etc., and in this way they have to initiate intelligent natures no less than the grossest of creatures. [...] The great, prodigious absurdity of these hypotheses is to say that the gods, embellished with great science, were formed by a principle which does

not know anything; indeed neither Chaos, nor air, nor the sea are thinking beings [...] But even though these hypotheses may seem false and senseless, I am not longer amazed, as I used to be, that philosophers have been able to admit them. Most of them held that the soul of man is corporeal. [...] The common opinion of the pagans on the divine nature merely posited a difference of more or less between the gods and men. Now, as a consequence of this, nothing prevents us from imagining that the gods had been composed of parts of matter, which had been more greatly rarefied. [...] It derives from all of this that there is nothing more dangerous nor more contagious than to establish some false principle. It is a bad yeast, which even though it is little can ruin the whole dough. Once posited, one absurdity leads to many others. Just get it wrong regarding the human soul alone, imagine falsely that it is not a substance distinct from extension: this mistake will be capable of making you believe that there are gods who were first born from fermentation and then multiplied by marriage. I cannot end without observing something that amazes me. Nothing seems to me to be founded on clearer and more distinct ideas of the immateriality of all that which thinks, and yet there are philosophers in Christianity who maintain that extension is capable of thought; they are philosophers of the greatest genius and most profound meditation. Can we trust the clarity of ideas after that?" (art. *Jupiter*, *rem.* G, II, p. 903; Bayle refers here to art. *Dicéarque*, *rem.* L, II, pp. 287–288, in which there is a discussion on thinking and non-thinking bodies; in the following *rem.* M, he touches on the dispute over whether the soul of man is distinct from matter, which took place between Locke and the Anglican bishop Edward Stillingfleet).

Bayle's criticism of the Christian philosophers who did not adhere to Cartesianism is worth stressing because it was taken up again in the *Continuation des pensées diverses sur la comète* (1704), in which ancient philosophy is interpreted as a naturalism that ultimately emerges in the doctrines of Strato of Lampsacus, while the Christian philosophers who are inspired by Platonism (such as Cudworth) or Aristotelianism are judged to be unconscious bearers of materialistic and atheistic doctrines. Cartesianism thus functions as a yardstick of all previous philosophies (cf. Labrousse, II, pp. 188–197, which reconstructs the outlines of Bayle's accusations against ancient philosophy). The same general division of philosophers into pagans (who maintain the eternity of matter) and Christians (creationists) is superseded by that much more rigorous division into Cartesians and non-Cartesians: only the former are able to do "good philosophy", while the others, even if they are believers, remain mired in irresolvable contradictions. The relationship between Cartesianism and the philosophies of the past is posited therefore in ambivalent terms: on one hand Bayle seems to admit analogies between the thought of Descartes and Malebranche and the doctrines of several ancient philosophers or identify the seventeenth-century development of physics with the "restoration of the ancient principles which Aristotle had abandoned" (art. *Aristote*, *rem.* M, I, p. 327); on the other hand he highlights the novelty of Cartesianism, whose distinction between *res extensa* and *res cogitans* is an achievement only made in the last century. Interesting here is the justification given to the curiosity of Marguerite of Navarre, who is reported in an anecdote to have tried to see or feel the soul leave

the body of one of her ladies in waiting on the point of death: "The curiosity that led her to observe a dying person attentively clearly reveals that she did not have the ideas that a true philosopher must have regarding the nature of the soul. [. . .] This princess can be easily excused for having conceived of the spirit of man as a being which separates itself locally from the human body at the moment in which man expires, since this was the universal opinion of theologians and philosophers in that century, and it is still today the opinion of all those doctors who are not Cartesians" (art. *Navarre, Marguerite de*, article and *rem.* L, III, p. 469; this observation was later taken up by Deslandes, *Histoire critique*, IV, pp. 158–159).

The alleged correspondence between Christian creationism and Cartesian dualism allows Bayle room for manoeuvre with regard to classical philosophy, which leads him to stress traditional value judgements and to substitute the adaptations of an apologetic religious type with a rigorous and unprejudiced consequentiality. The philosophical systems usually judged closest to Christianity, such as Aristotelianism and Platonism, are in fact condemned without appeal because of their intrinsic incoherence, while their alleged orthodoxy is defined as "bastard and monstrous". A system such as that of Epicurus on the other hand, "oppressed by so many barbarous centuries under a heap of prejudices" is exalted for its coherence and paradoxically considered useful to faith itself. "It seems to me that among the many apologists of Epicurus", observes Bayle regarding the writers who defended him from the Renaissance onwards, "there should have been some who, in condemning his impiety, made an effort to show that it derives naturally and philosophically from the error, common to all pagans, of the eternal existence of matter". The ancients held a number of different opinions on the origin of the world, "but they all agreed that on this point, that the matter of the world was not created. [. . .] Now I tell you that, once this impiety is posited, [namely] that God is not the creator of matter, it is less absurd to maintain, as the Epicureans did, that God was not the creator of the world and did not care to rule it, than to maintain, as many other philosophers did, that he had formed it, that he preserved it, and that he was its 'director'. What they said was true", Bayle insists, with a wholly Cartesian rigour, "but that does not mean that they did not speak incoherently (*inconséquemment*), and that it was not an intrusive truth: it did not enter into their system by the door, but by the window. [. . .] Their orthodoxy was a bastard and monstrous production: it came out of their ignorance by accident, and it was due to this that they were unable to reason correctly". Further on, Bayle directs his criticism against Platonism and imagines a brief dialogue between Epicurus and the Platonists, which are the object of a good seven objections, based on the principle that all God's intervention upon eternal and uncreated matter goes "against the laws and the ideas of order and the most exact notions" (art. *Épicure*, article and *rem.* M and S, II, pp. 370–372). Such objections "that could seriously threaten the pagan philosophers, disappear and disperse like smoke for those to whom revelation has taught that God is the creator of the world as far as both matter and form are concerned; this truth is of unparalleled importance, since there derive from it like a fertile spring the most sublime and fundamental dogmas, and it would not be possible to posit the opposite hypothesis without destroying many great principles of reasoning". After having illustrated this

assertion, the author calls on the authoritative testimony of Malebranche in his support: "I am sure that one of the great philosophers of this century, and at the same time one of the writers most zealous regarding the dogmas of the Gospel, will agree on the fact that, by making an apology for Epicurus, as we have seen *ex hypothesi* in the previous note, he performs a great service for the true faith. He not only teaches that there would be no providence if God had not created matter, but also that God would be ignorant of the existence of some matter if it was uncreated [there follows a long passage from Malebranche's *Méditations chrétiennes*]" (art. *Épicure*, *rem.* T, II, p. 374).

Bayle's interpretation of ancient thought and its relationship with Spinozism on one hand and with Cartesian philosophy on the other gives us the opportunity to make a series of collateral considerations. In the first place it allows us to identify some of the contents which are specific to that 'history of the errors of the philosophers' which we spoke of in general terms in para 2.1.3.2. There are two principal lines along which to reconstruct this history: the principle of the eternity of the world, whose chronological context is well defined as it characterises the whole of the ancient age, and the principle of the coincidence of God and nature, namely "Spinozism", which is instead present here and there throughout the entire course of human thought. To these two capital errors we can add the contradictions of those who were not able to deduce all the logical consequences of the revealed dogma of creation, according to the Cartesian yardstick. From another point of view it is instead the dogmatism of the "philosopher-lawyers" which constitutes the fundamental vice of so many philosophical systems. Within these great errors of doctrine and method, however, there are significant differences according to the coherence demonstrated by each of the "erring" philosophers, whose intellectual stature Bayle looks to with profound respect and unconcealed sympathy. The drama of Xenophanes, who fell because he tried to climb too high with reason, and the admirable coherence of Epicurus (and then Strato) we must add the greatness of which, despite their errors, Democritus, Aristotle, and Averroes gave us proof. "We will be amazed", notes Bayle, "that such sublime geniuses as Aristotle and Averroes invented so many chimeras regarding the intellect; but I dare say that they would never have invented them if they had not been great spirits. And it is due to their great capacity for penetration that they discovered difficulties which forced them to leave the beaten track" (art. *Averroès*, *rem.* E, I, p. 386).

Spinoza himself, even though he is condemned for his doctrines, is appreciated for his upright moral conduct in harmony with the theory of the "virtuous atheist". This impious philosopher was "affable, honest, polite and of austere customs: a strange thing, but one which should not amaze us, however, any more than we are amazed at seeing people who behaved very badly during their lives, even though they adhered in spirit to the principles of the Gospel" (art. *Spinoza*, IV, pp. 257–258). A history of errors, therefore, but always the errors of individual philosophers, or exalted people. Though elaborating several super-individual categories, Bayle's investigation of the history of philosophy presents above all a review of great men who sought in vain to penetrate a truth that reason is not given to possess, and whose greatness consists precisely in their attempting to do so and then "falling". The

rigour of Cartesian philosophy is not enough to reveal to us the secrets of reality, and hence the "chimeras" of Aristotle and Averroes in the passage quoted above are explained by the fact that "the problem of the formation of thought is even more impenetrable than that of the origin of the soul". Bayle notes elsewhere that "philosophers are not able to understand the machine of the world any more than a peasant is able to understand a great clock. They only know a small portion of it, unaware of the maker's plan, his views, his aims, and the reciprocal relationship of all the pieces" (art. *Anaxagoras*, *rem.* R, I, p. 218). In the moments in which it also invests the philosophical plane, the *désespoir de la vérité* creates a sort of fundamental solidarity between Bayle and the "erring reason" of the *grands esprits* of the past. Besides the super-individual categories like Spinozism, it is once again the "history of the philosophers" which is at the centre of Bayle's interests.

Another point to be noted in the margin of our analysis concerns Bayle's attitude towards the themes of *philosophia perennis* and *prisca theologia*, which had been vigorously taken up a few years earlier in Thomassin's history of philosophy. The radical difference between the principles of ancient and modern philosophy and pagan and Christian thought, which implies completely changing the criteria of judgement, excludes the idea of an original truth which was maintained in different people and in different epochs (cf. Cantelli, *Teologia*, p. 253; Id., *Vico e Bayle*, pp. 15–16, 19–20). Bayle shows himself to be sceptical over the alleged wisdom of Adam and Abraham. Those who, basing themselves on the fact that Adam gave names to the beasts, maintain that he "was a great philosopher, do not reason enough", comments Bayle, "to be worth confuting". Regarding Abraham, next, there are so many errors and uncertain traditions (also regarding the sciences and the books attributed to him) that the most indefatigable writers would not be able to list them all (art. *Adam*, *rem.* D, I, p. 72; art. *Abraham*, article and *rem.* D-E, I, pp. 32–33).

The articles *Sommona-Codom* and *Zoroastre* (notably enlarged in the second edition of the *Dictionnaire*) and *remarques* A and B of the article *Spinoza* demonstrate, it is true, a new interest in the ancient thought of the East and the doctrines of the Chinese, but this does nothing to alter the theory of a total incompatibility of these concepts with an allegedly ancient wisdom which derived uninterruptedly from the sons of Noah. The theory of the general consensus of the ancient philosophers regarding the existence of God is contradicted by the observations which Bayle makes against Thomassin's interpretation, in which the Ionic philosophers were only interested in second causes not because they were unaware of or rejected the existence of the first cause (which the most ancient poet-theologians had insisted on), but because they took this cause for granted (see above, Chapter 1, para 1.5.4.3). Bayle's criticism is made with his usual rigour and introduces an element of discontinuity in the development of ancient thought: "Here is a nice thought, an ingenious idea; but it is perhaps more striking in its appearance than it is solid, since we see that Anaximenes, master of Anaxagoras, never deals with philosophy as if he took it for granted that the existence of God, as a first cause, was so well-known that it was not necessary to speak of it. He spoke of the gods; but far from considering them as principles, he maintained that they too owed their existence to the principle that he

established. [. . .] All of this goes against *père* Thomassin. It is no longer a question of physicists who did nothing but pass off the doctrine of the existence of God in silence. These are physicists who spoke of it, but in a way quite opposite to that of the poets and Anaxagoras. I will add that their simple silence would prove much, since at that time physicists went back to chaos, back to the first origin of things [unlike modern physicists who only study second causes]. Whatever the case, we take it for granted that these ancient philosophers were not unaware of what the poets had said of God. Why, then, they did not imitate them? Is it perhaps because of the fact that they did not trust the poets, in whom they saw a mass of frivolity and popular opinions which did not stand up to philosophical examination? Aristotle insinuated this. Did he perhaps judge them as Socrates had judged them when he said that fanatics are like the poets, and that neither of them really mean what they say?" (art. *Anaxagoras*, *rem.* F, I, p. 212).

A third series of observations can be made regarding Bayle's position on the theme of the relationship between the ancients and the moderns, already outlined in the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*. The superiority of the moderns is made to consist not in the excellence of their theories – which, taken one by one are found in the ancients – but in the fact that they made fewer errors and contradictions and in their greater systematism and methodology. Paradoxically it is precisely Bayle, so fragmentary and disarticulate, who maintains the need for a global perspective as a condition for making any objective judgement on the ancients and moderns. "I have no doubt", he observes in a *Réflexion sur le parallèle des Anciens et Modernes*, written in reply to some remarks in the *Préface* to Jean Corbinelli's *Les anciens historiens latins réduits en maximes* (1694), "that, if we compare the ancients with the moderns by their separate thoughts, we will easily convince ourselves that the latter do not have the advantage, as I do not believe that in this century much that is great or subtle has been thought which we cannot see in the books of the ancients. The most sublime concepts of metaphysics and morals which we admire in some of the moderns are found in the books of the ancient philosophers: thus, in order for our century to be able to claim superiority, we must compare an entire work with an entire work. Who can in fact doubt that a work, which in its strong points is not inferior to other works considered according to their strong points, is not inferior to them if its weak points are both more numerous and more serious than the weak points of the other works? Who can doubt that, even if M. Descartes had found in the books of the ancients all the parts of his system, he does not deserve more admiration than them because he has managed to organize together so many disparate parts and form a methodical system from something that was unconnected?" (art. *Corbinelli*, *rem.* E, II, p. 225).

Elsewhere Bayle attributes some peoples' preference for the ancients to more hidden and less noble motives, connected to jealousy and envy. After quoting a passage from the *Examen de la théologie de M. Jurieu* (1694) by Élie Saurin ("The charity we have for those who have been dead for many centuries does not cost anything, since their merit does not arouse our jealousy and our envy, and we do not consider them as our competitors"), he comments thus: "We have used these observations many times to explain the conduct of those who have held that Sophocles,

Euripides, Aristophanes, Aristotle etc. greatly surpassed Corneille, Racine, Molière, Des-Cartes etc." (art. *Origène*, *rem.* B, III, p. 540). These considerations on the *querelle* between ancients and moderns are complemented by several observations on the *esprits novateurs*, which are interesting because they allow us to identify the way in which the transition between ancient and modern came about. "He was a subtle genius, but too avid to distinguish himself with new opinions", writes Bayle of Peter of Auriole, referring to the negative judgement contained in the *Erotemata de malis ac bonis libris* by the Jesuit Théophile Raynaud (1653). In the following comment he re-evaluates the role of the innovators, even if in moderate terms: "We must nevertheless admit that these rather confusing spirits of renewal are at times necessary; indeed without them could we make any considerable progress? Would we not fall asleep pretending that everything has already been discovered and that we must agree with the opinions of our fathers, as with their [opinions on the] Earth and the Sun? The disputes and the confusion caused by ambitious, bold, and reckless spirits is never pure evil" (art. *Aureolus*, *rem.* B, I, p. 401).

2.1.3.6. In his "history of the philosophers" Bayle takes up the traditional biographical method, which nevertheless, thanks to his *remarques*, allows him room – and at times a great deal of room – for discussions of a speculative nature. More than structure, however, we should stress the methodological criteria which inspire Bayle and make him "the originator of the ideal of historical accuracy" (Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Enlightenment*, p. 206), signalling a milestone in the development of the historical disciplines, and, in this context, also philosophical historiography. Bayle is certainly not a philologist, either by training or by profession; his interests are mainly philosophical and theological and are directed towards topical themes, which, as we have seen, mediate his very relationship with the ancient philosophies. Nevertheless, this genial journalist demonstrates a very high degree of critical awareness, both in his historiographical practice and the methodological reflections which accompany it. Among the latter, the most frequent concerns the use of sources, which must be first-hand and in their original language; this is the principal tool used by Bayle in his " hunt for errors", which goes at times to extreme lengths. In the preface to the *Dictionnaire* he justifies his method of quoting lengthy passages from his authors: it is due not only to the fact that "this work must for many people act as a library", but also to the need to "make each witness speak in his natural language" since "it is rash [. . .] to believe what is attributed to authors, when their own words are not quoted" (*Dictionnaire*, I, pp. v–vi).

This principle is stressed in the lengthy article on Carneades, which we can take as a methodological specimen. After quoting numerous Greek and Latin sources in full on the doctrinal affinities between Carneades and Arcesilaus, Bayle recognises that "many people will complain about the amount of passages that we have just seen", and replies in these terms: "I have foreseen their scorn, their disgust, and their magisterial criticism, and I have decided not to take any notice. I have preferred to act as a copyist, for the benefit of those who, without leaving the place where they find themselves, can with ease enlighten themselves historically (*sont bien aisés de s'éclaircir historiquement*) on the opinions of the ancients, and see the original

versions of the proofs, I mean the proper terms of the witnesses. This has been my principle on a hundred other occasions". The following *remarques* point out an error of memory committed by the humanist Marc-Antoine Muret († 1585), who mistook Crysippus for Carneades and transmitted this mistake to Jakob Thomasius. Bayle corrects several criticisms that Ménage had made against Jonsius in his *Anti-Baillet*, and then explains the reasons for this pitiless hunt for the smallest of errors: "I merely stress these details in order to make writers accustomed to the strictest accuracy, since, if they let themselves go they make others commit mistakes in turn". Further on, Bayle notes with great clarity and effectiveness the disadvantages of using second-hand quotations isolated from their context. In response to Willem Saldenus, who in his *De libris varioque eorum usu et abusu* (1688) had compared Carneades with Heraclitus for his alleged "obscurity", he notes that in reality the passage from Cicero which was being referred to merely states that it was impossible to discover what Carneades' opinion was because of his scepticism (and not the obscurity of his expressions). "I do not accuse the good Saldenus", comments Bayle with a note of humour, "for not having understood the words of Cicero [. . .] I do not doubt that he would have understood them if he had taken them at source; but he found them in exile, where they had lost their natural appearance. Let us forgive him therefore for not having recognised them. He saw them in some modern book, where they had only arrived after travelling through all sorts of countries. They had been so badly treated by thieves that nothing was left of their belongings. They had been through so many hands that, had they only received one little knock at every passage, this would have been more than enough to rob them of their life. It is thus that we reason with regard to an infinite number of passages, which are copied in the first modern writer that we come across. They are poor fugitives, robbed, crippled, scarred, etc.; is it surprising that we are so wrong about their condition and that we are unable to discover their qualities at birth?" (art. *Carnéade*, *rem.* B, D, E, O, II, pp. 59–60 and 64; analogous observations are made in the article *Anaxagoras*, *rem.* C, I, M, Vol. I, pp. 209 and 215–216, which point out a number of errors in translation and paraphrasing made by Moréri and dwell on the reasons which lead to the distortions of the *bons-mots* of the ancients; cf. also art. *Aristote*, *rem.* B, I, p. 324; art. *Cratippe*, *rem.* B, II, p. 223; art. *Diogène le Cynique*, *rem.* F, II, p. 292).

We find a veritable theory of quotation, which is at the same time a self-apology, in several *Considérations sur les livres pleins de citations* in the margins of the contrast between Crysippus (who merely copied what others had already said) and Epicurus (who "had drawn everything from his own mind"). It is a text which it is worth while pausing over, as in it we find a very clear outline of that "critical" erudition which is opposed to pure and simple compilation and doxography. "It would be very wrong", Bayle immediately makes it clear, "to pretend, generally speaking, that Epicurus's method is that of the great geniuses, and that which costs most, and that the method of Crysippus is that of modest minds (*des petits esprits*), and that which costs less. Always remember that by the method of Crysippus I merely mean the habit of accumulating authorities. I certainly do not mean the personal negligence of this philosopher and the excesses he reached in his work of compilation. Having said this, I maintain that there are authors just as great, and geniuses just as sublime

in the sect of Crysippus as there are in the opposite sect; and I will prove it with the three great names that Gabriel Naudé lists" [= Plutarch, Seneca, and Montaigne, whom Bayle compares to Cicero, La Mothe Le Vayer, Ménage, and others]. These *Considérations* are developed further in a *Remarque critique*, in which the "great quoters" are divided into two classes: "there are some who are content to sack modern authors and collect into a [single] body the compilations of many others who have worked on the same subject. They do not check anything, they never go back to the originals, they never even examine what comes before and what comes after in the modern author they use as an original; they do not even write quotations, but only indicate to their publisher the pages from the printed books from which the passages are to be taken. You cannot deny that this method of writing books is too convenient and that, without much effort from a writer's brain, it can produce in a short span time ten large volumes. There are other quoters who only trust themselves: they want to check everything, they always go back to the source, examine the author's aim, do not limit themselves to the passage they need, carefully consider what comes before and what comes after. [. . .] I am not afraid to say, regarding this method of writing, that it is a hundred times more demanding than that of our Epicurus, and that according to this latter method a book of a thousand pages could be written in less time than a book of four hundred pages according to the other method" (art. *Épicure*, *rem.* E, II, pp. 366–367).

Bayle's discussion of methodology is not monotonous, as it might seem from the stress on the theme of quotation, but also touches on other aspects. Reflecting the great interest that the learned of his age had for chronology, Bayle devotes many of his critical observations to problems of dating, which provide him with an abundant harvest of *faussetez* (cf. for example, art. *Bion*, *rem.* M, I, p. 569, where it is Plutarch who is accused). The need for completeness and objectivity as well as an interest in salacious themes, which many readers of the *Dictionnaire* were sensitive to, are at the basis of the extensive coverage of Augustine's youth, a period which had been neglected on the other hand by the compilations of Moréri and Du Pin: "If those gentlemen", observes Bayle, "had not passed too lightly over the dissolute life of St. Augustine, I could have excluded them entirely from this article; but for the great education of the public, it is right to present great men left, right, and centre" (art. *Augustin*, I, p. 393). The importance of a prior examination of the context for arriving at a correct interpretation is vigorously re-affirmed in a criticism of Ménage's commentary on Diogenes Laertius ("I have said a hundred times, that we leave ourselves open to making false conclusions when we quote a passage without having examined what comes before and what comes after it": art. *Chrysippe*, *rem.* N, II, p. 172). On the other hand Bayle places us on our guard against arbitrary reconstructions of the ancient systems of thought, conducted on the basis of a few isolated fragments. "If we had the writings of Diogenes of Apollonia we would undoubtedly see that he had foreseen or clarified all these types of difficulties; but since his system is only known to us through a tiny number of separate particles, we can only grope our way forwards when we try to put together all the badly-assorted pieces" (art. *Diogène d'Apollonie*, *rem.* B, II, p. 296).

As for the writers whom Bayle quotes as sources or as the object of critical analysis, they are very wide-ranging, above all his contemporaries, and they offer a great deal of material for that "history of the errors *on* the philosophers" which runs parallel to and complements the "history of the errors *of* the philosophers". He gives us a particularly effective example of his hunt for errors arising from the mistaken interpretation of a source (in this case Plutarch) on the question of the mother of Epicurus, Chaerestrate (cf. art. *Épicure*, *rem.* C, II, p. 364, where the list of those who have erred includes Gassendi, Naudé, Rapin, and Chevreau). Bayle shows no indulgence for the ancient authors, towards whom he expresses some harsh judgements. He thus comments on an error in dating which he has come across in Plutarch: "This is the piteous state in which the ancients, whose are so highly praised, have left the history of philosophers. A thousand contradictions all over the place, a thousand incompatible facts, a thousand false dates" (art. *Archelaüs*, *rem.* A, I, p. 290). Nor is the prince of ancient philosophical historiography safe from criticism: "It is hard for me to understand what he means to say", notes Bayle with regard to an anecdote by Diogenes Laertius on Ariston of Chios: "[. . .] his brevity is at times so unbearable that one would say that we only have badly-ordered extracts of his history of the philosophers" (art. *Ariston*, *rem.* D, I, p. 321). "I say this", he specifies after criticising Moréri's translation of a passage from the *Lives of the Philosophers*, "without wishing to justify the good Diogenes Laertius, who did not know what he was saying most of the time, in reducing the doctrines of the philosophers to a compendium" (art. *Anaxagoras*, *rem.* C, I, p. 209).

On the other hand, Bayle openly recognises that "we have nothing precise on the history of the ancient philosophers", and hence it is permissible to make some conjectures. From the point of view of history in general, he points out that "the ancient historians followed the principle of only quoting the main points to such an extent that they did not shed any light on certain little details. Their principle is excellent, but there is an art to specifying the facts in a few words and in passing, which would be of great use if one wished or knew how to practice it": there re-emerges in these statements that taste for the smallest detail which, as we have seen, characterises Bayle's historiographical work (art. *Archelaüs*, *rem.* A, I, p. 289; art. *Archelaüs, roi de Cappadoce*, *rem.* K, I, p. 295). Among modern writers (apart from Moréri who is continually the target of criticism) Bayle makes use of Vossius, Naudé, de Launoy, La Mothe Le Vayer, Hornius, Jonsius (who is corrected more than once), Ménage, and Baillet, as well as Jakob Thomasius and Thomassin mentioned above. Stanley's *Historia philosophiae orientalis* is often quoted in the article on Zoroaster and is also the object of several corrections (art. *Zoroastre*, *rem.* B, IV, p. 556). But it is Rapin above all who represents, so to speak, Bayle's favourite interlocutor in the field of the history of philosophy. The famous Jesuit, whom Bayle had already mentioned in his letter to Minutoli, is used both as an authoritative source and as a term of critical reference, in the discussion of Aristotle in particular (art. *Aristote*, I, pp. 323ff). An obligatory reference, given Bayle's Protestant origin, concerns the placing of Melanchthon among the anti-Aristotelian reformers: Bayle demonstrates the unfounded nature of Rapin's opinion, due among other things to an incorrect reading

of a passage from Hornius' *Historia philosophica* (art. *Melanchthon*, *rem.* K, III, pp. 373–374). Another correction, typical of our author's "style", refers to the inaccurate quotation of a passage from Cicero regarding Andronicus of Rhodes: Rapin's inaccuracy here is not attributed to an involuntary oversight, but to a desire not to weigh down the narration, since "we prefer to be deceived by a fluent and cogent narrative than to be bored by an excessively detailed discourse" (art. *Andronique*, *rem.* B, I, p. 236).

2.1.4. Written according to a particularly successful formula which united depth and accuracy of analysis with pleasant and brilliant erudition, the *Dictionnaire historique et critique* circulated first among the learned; with the beginning of the Regency (1715) it then enjoyed a vast diffusion, accompanied by a lively debate of a philosophical and religious nature which lasted the whole of the 18th century and whose various phases and characteristics have been reconstructed by Pierre Rétat. The fortune of the *Dictionnaire* as a work of philosophical historiography expressed itself in different levels and in different ways; if we limit ourselves here to its fortune as a general history of philosophy, we must note first of all that it lent itself to be abbreviated into *abrégés*, particularly suited to the mood of the times: in 1755, for example, the abbé de Marsy published an *Analyse raisonnée de Bayle* in 4 volumes, the third and the fourth of which present a complete history of ancient philosophy taken from the *Dictionnaire* (on the French *abrégés* of Bayle's work cf. Rétat, *Le Dictionnaire de Bayle*, pp. 304–312; but now see *P. Bayle: pour une histoire critique de la philosophie. Choix d'articles philosophiques tirés du "Dictionnaire"*, ed. J.-M. Gros (Paris, 2001). In Germany, where the work had been translated in 1741–1744, the philosophical articles were subsequently collected and published apart by Ludwig Heinrich Jakob with the significant subtitle *herausgegeben zur Beförderung des Studiums der Geschichte der Philosophie und des menschlichen Geistes* (Halle, 1797). We can also add to this level the anonymous *Abrégé de l'histoire des sçavans anciens et modernes*, tome premier (Paris: au Palais chez le Gras [. . .] et chez Edouard près l'Hôtel-Dieu, 1708), 12°, 382 pp., attributed to the Carthusian Alexis Gaudin and published by the abbé Tricaud: it is a collection of 23 ancient and 34 modern sages which was accused of having plagiarized Bayle's *Dictionnaire* (see in this regard MT, July, 1708, pp. 1143–1153; in 1704 Gaudin [1650–1708] had printed a work on *La distinction et la nature du bien et du mal*, which denounced Bayle's excessive sympathy for Manicheism: cf. Rétat, *Le Dictionnaire de Bayle*, pp. 91–92, where no mention is made however of the *Abrégé* in question).

In the second place the *Dictionnaire* offered eighteenth-century writers tackling the general history of philosophy an inexhaustible source of information, and as such was mentioned by Dornius[7] and used in the first half of the century by Buddeus and Brucker in Germany, Burigny, Saint-Aubin, and Deslandes in France, and by Capasso and above all Genovesi in Italy. Bayle's presence is particularly

[7]Jonsius, p. 219: "In eo secundum alphabeti ordinem praeter alios viros doctos atque inlustres, philosophos inprimis etiam exposuit ita, ut multa saepe singularia de ipsorum doctrina, sectis, dogmatibus et vitae ratione tradiderit".

notable in Buddeus: he is the most quoted writer (54 times) in the *Compendium historiae philosophicae* (1712) and is largely used in Buddeus's other works too (Braun, p. 105n; Masi, *Eclettismo e storia della filosofia*, pp. 173, 185–188, 199–201; see below, Chapter 5). Brucker defined Bayle as a "man of profound erudition and unusual acumen", and in the profile devoted to him in the section *De scepticis recentioribus* he praised the vast knowledge displayed in the *Dictionnaire*, noting that it was based on recent literature more than on ancient writers, and in this he clearly grasps Bayle's nature as a great "journalist" rather than a professional scholar (Brucker, I, p. 176; IV, p. 599; but see also II, p. 217 and III, p. 63 note, where several criticisms are made: regarding Bayle's use of Plotinus's life of Porphyry, Brucker is amazed that Bayle did not use his *criticum acumen* against the fables it contains, while the article on al-Kindi is done "neither accurately not completely enough"). Despite the appearance of the *Encyclopédie*, the *Dictionnaire* continued to be an important source even into the second half of the eighteenth century. Alexandre Savérien, author of a *Histoire des philosophes modernes* and a *Histoire des philosophes anciens jusqu'à la Renaissance des lettres* (which came out in 1760–1783) noted that Bayle "is always an accurate, faithful, and disinterested historian, and a moderate, penetrating, and sensible critic" (Garin, "La storia 'critica' ", p. 273). At the end of the century, in the middle of the revolutionary period, the *citoyen* Jacques-André Naigeon in his *Philosophie ancienne et moderne* (included in the *Encyclopédie méthodique* and published in Paris in 3 volumes from 1791 to 1794) was to transcribe entire pages from some of the articles of the *Dictionnaire* and was to heap praise upon its author (Rétat, *Le Dictionnaire de Bayle*, pp. 453–454). In the bibliography compiled by Tennemann the *Dictionnaire* figures among the "Miscellanies containing various research and observations on the history of philosophy" together with Cudworth's *True Intellectual System* and Huet's *Demonstratio evangelica* (Tennemann, p. 17).

The *Dictionnaire* is not only a "warehouse" of information, however: besides pure and simple historical facts it also includes textual analysis, critical reflections, and categories of interpretation, beginning with the "Spinozism" which inspires, for example, Buddeus' *Exercitatio historico-philosophica de Spinozismo ante Spinozam* (1701) and which Burigny clearly considers in his *Histoire de la philosophie païenne* (on the success of Bayle's comparative method in the interpretation of Spinozism cf. Vernière, *Spinoza et la pensée française*, pp. 336, 349–350; Frigo, "*L'ateo di sistema*", pp. 811 ff.). Indeed the very nature of the *Dictionnaire*, in which the smallest details are interwoven with positions of a speculative nature, often brought its users up against theories in the margins of orthodoxy, raising disturbing questions. It follows then that the relationship with this wholly exceptional "source" is diversified, complex, and ambiguous, and the "warehouse" of information becomes the term of a critical and at times polemical comparison. It is precisely Buddeus, for example, who in his *Theses theologicae de atheismo et superstitione* (Jena, 1717) combats Manicheism and the theory of the "virtuous atheist", the same theory we met in the *article* on Diagoras, while Saint-Aubin adopts the solution of openly criticising Bayle for his theological positions and secretly using him as a source for his historical information, without taking into consideration that his

whole plan for a *Traité de l'opinion*, conceived of as a history of the lacunae and errors of humanity in the various fields of knowledge, would clearly appear to be inspired by the *Dictionnaire*, even if Saint-Aubin's apologetic religious motivations are very different from the reasons which inspired Bayle. For his part the abbé d'Olivet (the editor of Huet's *Traité philosophique*) used Bayle in the *Remarques sur la théologie des philosophes grecs* he added to the French translation of Cicero's *De natura deorum* (Paris, 1721) to demonstrate that the ancient philosophers were far from the Christian perspective; at the same time however he attempts to preserve the essential elements of a natural theology in ancient thought and accuses the author of the *Dictionnaire* of deliberately trying to place Greek philosophers, such as Thales, under the banner of materialism (Rétat, *Le Dictionnaire de Bayle*, pp. 144–145, which also mentions the reply by the marquis d'Argens, who, in his *Examen critique des remarques de M. l'abbé d'Olivet*, printed in 1746, maintained that the ancient philosophers had all been materialists). Moving on to the age of the *Idéologues*, we must note the attitude towards Bayle's scepticism assumed by Joseph-Marie Degérando in his *Histoire comparée des systèmes de philosophie* (Paris, 1804). Aiming at an "inductive" synthesis in which opposite philosophical positions merge and balance, the author recognises the usefulness of scepticism, Bayle's in particular, in so far as it combats dogmatic excesses and opposes experience to pure reason; it is however a relative usefulness, since the lack of confidence in man's abilities has as its only result "the void of nothing and the immobility of the tomb". Referring to two famous articles of the *Dictionnaire* (*Pyrrhon* and *Manichéens*) Degérando stresses the speculative "sterility" of modern scepticism, which limits itself to repeating the arguments of Sextus Empiricus (Rétat, *Le Dictionnaire de Bayle*, pp. 462–463).

Another level in the fortune of the *Dictionnaire* regards the "lesson" in theory and historiographical method it contains. If we find Bayle's critically erudite methodology at work in its most technical and extrinsic aspect in the practical historiography of Buddeus (but also in the more modest Burigny), then it is in Heumann's theoretical elaborations that Bayle's method with its epistemological premises is adopted as a model of historical research and applied to the specific field of the history of philosophy (see below, Chapter 6). Moving on now to a review of the principal positions take by the criticism of Bayle as a "historian of philosophy", we must remember in the first place the opinion expressed by Ch. Bénard in the entry on Brucker in the *Dictionnaire des sciences philosophiques*, edited by Adolphe Franck: after stating that the "history of philosophy is a modern science, and Brucker is its first serious representative", Bénard specifies that "if we wish to indicate the true founders of the history of philosophy it is to Bayle and Leibniz that we must attribute this title. The former gave the world criticism, the latter outlined the plan of the new science. Brucker had the honour of erecting its first monument" (DSPh, I, p. 386). Forty years later, Bayle's "critical" perspective is re-affirmed as the starter motor of modern philosophical historiography, together with the theme of tolerance, in a brief but interesting essay on theory and methodology by François Picavet, the well-known scholar of the *Idéologues* and medieval thought: "Bayle, before Brucker and more rightly than Stanley or Thomasius, could be called, in modern times, the founder of

the history of philosophy; he devoted himself to a highly discerning criticism and set out doctrines with great accuracy which he contrasted with one another, in order to demand tolerance for all philosophical or religious sects" [Brucker and Tiedemann are then mentioned] (F. Picavet, *L'histoire de la philosophie*, pp. 3–4).

More recently, Bayle's role in the origins of modern philosophical historiography has been analysed in detail by Garin, in a decisive revision of the theory, held also by Banfi in his time, that the birth of this historiography took place in the period between the Enlightenment and Romanticism. After pointing out that at a certain point Banfi himself "is forced to go back to Bayle, who is not a late eighteenth-century phenomenon", Garin sees in the *Dictionnaire* "an obligatory term of reference" for any understanding of the philosophical historiography of the eighteenth century, above all regarding the evolution of the traditional *ars critica*, understood as philological criticism, to a "new *critique* as a free an unprejudiced judgement of every writer, present or past, by the tribunal of reason" (Garin, "La storia 'critica'", pp. 245–246, 258–262, 283–284). More limiting and "technical" is the interpretation given by Braun: while Garin places Bayle, with his *désespoir de la verité*, at the beginning of an "exemplary story" which involves "the origin, method, and the very possibility of a history of philosophy" and which finally results in "Hegel's triumphal certainty", Braun judges Bayle's historiographical attitude strictly linked to that of Heumann. He notes the presence of a *critique rationnelle* in the *Dictionnaire*, which he places between *critique littérale*, as was practiced in the genre of polyhistory, and *critique philosophique* which corresponds to Heumann's approach. Yet Heumann develops this *critique* within an overall vision of the history of philosophy, in a perspective of growth and gradual perfection in which faith and reason are reconciled and we catch a glimpse of the objective of "truth"; the sceptic Bayle, on the other hand, "is not preoccupied with the history of philosophy as such" and loses himself in an infinite mass of details which preclude any possibility of grasping some positive direction in the historical development of philosophy (Braun, pp. 105–107). Gueroult had already moved down this line of interpretation by noting how in the sceptical Bayle the "rehabilitation of history" is accompanied by a "pulverization of history". What is more: "this protagonist of the objective search for authenticity does not tend towards a positive and explanatory history of philosophy, but towards an abstract analysis of systems which turns its back on history, and which was to reach its apogee with Condillac". Hence the singular paradox: "Bayle is never so unhistorical as when he sits down to write a history of philosophy" (Gueroult, 1, pp. 250–251). Most recent studies on Bayle have mainly focused on his interpretation of specific lines of thought, from post-Aristotelians schools to Renaissance philosophers.

2.1.5. From the vast bibliography on Bayle we will limit ourselves here to mentioning, besides the fundamental general monographs, a number of works which are more directly concerned with the theme under discussion: J. Delvolvé, *Religion, critique et philosophie positive chez P. Bayle* (Paris, 1906; facs. repr. Geneva, 1970); Hazard, pp. 99–115; Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Enlightenment*, pp. 201–209; C.T. Harrison, "Bacon, Hobbes, Bayle and the Ancient Atomists", *Harvard Studies and*

Notes in Philosophy and Literature, XV (1933), pp. 191–213; A. Deregibus, "Il concetto di storia nel pensiero di P. Bayle", *Il Saggiatore*, 1 (1951), pp. 49–87; *P. Bayle, le philosophe de Rotterdam. Études et documents*, ed. P. Dibon (Amsterdam and Paris, 1959) (in particular: R.H. Popkin, "P. Bayle's Place on 17th Century Scepticism", pp. 1–19; A. Robinet, "L'aphilosophie de P. Bayle devant les philosophies de Malebranche et de Leibniz", pp. 48–65); Labrousse; W. Rex, *Essays on P. Bayle and Religious Controversy* (The Hague, 1965); M. Solé, "Religion et méthode critique dans le 'Dictionnaire' de Bayle" and "Religion et vision historiographique dans le 'Dictionnaire' de Bayle", in *Religion, érudition et critique à la fin du XVIIe siècle et au début du XVIIIe* (Paris, 1968), pp. 71–200; G. Cantelli, *Teologia e ateismo. Saggio sul pensiero filosofico e religioso di P. Bayle* (Florence, 1969); Id., *Vico e Bayle: premesse per un confronto* (Naples, 1971); A. Corsano, *Bayle, Leibniz e la storia* (Naples, 1971); P. Rétat, *Le "Dictionnaire" de Bayle et la lutte philosophique au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1971); L. Weibel, *Le savoir et le corps. Essai sur le "Dictionnaire" de Bayle* (Lausanne, 1975); M.M. Olivetti, "Da Leibniz a Bayle: alle radici degli 'Spinozabriefe' ", *Archivio di filosofia*, XXII (1978), pp. 147–199; L. Bianchi, *Tradizione libertina e critica storica: da Naudé a Bayle* (Milan, 1988); R. Whelan, *The Anatomy of Superstition. A Study of the Historical Theory and Practice of P. Bayle* (Oxford, 1989); G. Mori, *Tra Descartes e Bayle. Poiret e la teodicea* (Bologna, 1990); Id., *Bayle philosophe* (Paris, 1999); H.H.M. Van Lieshout, "The Library of P. Bayle", in *Bibliothecae selectae. Da Cusano a Leopardi*, ed. E. Canone (Florence, 1993), pp. 281–297; *De l'humanisme aux lumières: Bayle et le protestantisme. Mélanges en l'honneur d'É. Labrousse*, eds. A. McKenna, M. Magdelaine, M.-C. Pitassi, R. Whelan (Paris and Oxford, 1996); *P. Bayle e l'Italia*, ed. L. Bianchi (Naples, 1996); H. Bost, *Un "intellectuel" avant la lettre: le journaliste P. Bayle (1647–1706)* (Amsterdam, 1994); *Critique, savoir et érudition à la veille des Lumières. Le "Dictionnaire historique et critique" de P. Bayle*, ed. H. Bost (Amsterdam and Maarssen, 1998); *P. Bayle, citoyen du monde. De l'enfant de Carla à l'auteur du "Dictionnaire"*, ed. H. Bost and Ph. De Robert (Paris, 1999); G.L. Mori, *Bayle philosophe* (Paris, 1999); H.H.M. Van Lieshout, *The Making of P. Bayle's Dictionary* (Amsterdam and Utrecht, 2001); N. Stricker, *Die maskierte Theologie von P.Bayle* (New York, 2003); *P. Bayle dans la République des Lettres. Philosophie, religion, critique*, eds. A. McKenna and G. Paganini (Paris, 2004); H. Bost, *P. Bayle historien, critique et moraliste* (Turnhout, 2006); T. Ryan, *P. Bayle's Cartesian Metaphysics* (New York and London, 2008); *Les "Éclaircissements" de Pierre Bayle*. Édition des "Éclaircissements" du *Dictionnaire historique et critique* et études recueillies par H. Bost et A. McKenna (Paris, 2010); *Le rayonnement de Bayle*, eds. Ph. de Robert, C1. Pailhès and H. Bost (Oxford, 2010).

On Bayle as a "historian of philosophy" and his fortune (besides some of the essays and monographs quoted above): Jonsius, p. 219; Brucker, I, p. 176; II, p. 217; III, p. 63 note; IV, pp. 300–302, 387, 574–603 (in particular p. 599); V, p. 15; VI, p. 571; Tennemann, p. 17; DSPh, I, p. 386; F.-J. Picavet, *L'histoire de la philosophie. Ce qu'elle a été, ce qu'elle peut être* (Paris, 1888); A. Banfi, "Concetto e sviluppo della storiografia filosofica", *Civiltà moderna*, V (1933), pp. 392–427

and 552–566, repr. in Id., *La ricerca della realtà* (Florence, 1959 [Bologna, 1996]), I, pp. 101–167; Schiavone, "La letteratura plotiniana", pp. 46–48; Vernière, *Spinoza et la pensée française*, pp. 336 and 349–350; Proust, *Diderot et l'Encyclopédie*, pp. 238–240; F. Simone, "Il Rinascimento nelle concezioni storiografiche del Fleury e del Bayle", in Id., *Il Rinascimento francese. Studi e ricerche* (Turin, 1961), pp. 331–360; Garin, "La storia 'critica' ", pp. 245 ff.; Rak, pp. 69–70; P. Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica di A. Genovesi* (Naples, 1972), pp. 98, 100–101, 104–107; Braun, pp. 104–107; Del Torre, pp. 63–64 and *passim*; S. Masi, "Eclettismo e storia della filosofia in J.F. Budde", *Memorie della Accademia delle Scienze di Torino*, II. Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche, s. V, Vol. I (1976–1977), pp. 173, 185–188, 199, 201–203; G.F. Frigo, 'L'ateo di sistema'. Il 'caso Spinoza' nella storiografia filosofica tedesca dall'*Aufklärung* alla *Romantik*", *Verifiche*, IV (1977), pp. 811–859; G. Paganini, "Tra Epicuro e Stratone: Bayle e l'immagine di Epicuro dal Sei al Settecento", *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia*, XXXIII (1978), pp. 72–115; Id., *Analisi della fede e critica della ragione nella filosofia di P. Bayle* (Florence, 1980), pp. 274–374; Gueroult, 1, pp. 235–252; G. Bonacina, *Filosofia ellenistica e cultura moderna: epicureismo stoicismo e scetticismo da Bayle a Hegel* (Florence, 1996), pp. 17–41; J. Lagrée, "La critique du stoïcisme dans le *Dictionnaire* de Bayle", in *De l'Humanisme aux Lumières*, pp. 581–593; G. Piaia, "Gli aristotelici padovani al vaglio del 'Dictionnaire historique et critique' ", in *La presenza dell'aristotelismo padovano nella filosofia della prima modernità*, ed. G. Piaia (Rome and Padua, 2002), pp. 419–443; G. Canziani, "Les philosophes de la Renaissance italienne dans le 'Dictionnaire' ", in *Critique, savoir et érudition à la veille des Lumières*, ed. H. Bost, pp. 143–164; *Die Philosophie in Pierre Bayle's* Dictionnaire historique et critique, ed. L. Kreimendahl, *Aufklärung*, XVI (2004); L. Bianchi, "Bruno e Bayle: naturalismo e spinozismo", *Studi filosofici*, XXVII (2004), pp. 127–152; Id., "Du 'Dictionnaire' de Bayle à l' 'Encyclopédie' ", *Corpus. Revue de philosophie*, LI (2006), pp. 171–191; Id., "Note su Bayle storico della filosofia nel secolo dei Lumi", *Studi filosofici*, XXIX (2006), pp. 65–103; G. Varani, *Pensiero 'alato' e modernità. Il neoplatonismo nella storiografia filosofica in Germania (1559–1807)* (Padua, 2008), pp. 67–71; H. Bost, 'Bayle propose-t-il une histoire de la philosophie?', *Kriterion. Revista de Filosofia*, n. 120, L (2009), pp. 295–311.

2.2 Pierre-Daniel Huet (1630–1721)

Traité philosophique de la foiblesse de l'esprit humain

2.2.1. Man of letters, *érudit*, philosopher and theologian, Pierre-Daniel Huet (*Huetius*) was one of the most representative personalities of French culture in the late seventeenth century. Born in Caen in 1630 and educated by the Jesuits, he moved to Paris at the age of twenty-one, where he was welcomed into the libertine and erudite circle of Pierre Dupuy and Naudé. Like other intellectuals of the time, he stayed at the court of Queen Christina of Sweden, in the company of Samuel

Bochart. In 1670 he joined Bossuet as an "assistant tutor" to the heir of Louis XIV and edited the famous editions of the classics *ad usum Delphini*. He became a member of the *Académie française* in 1674, 2 years after having taken holy orders, and in 1678 was appointed abbot of Aulnay. He became Bishop of Avranches in 1685 and retired from his pastoral duties in 1699, spending the last years of his life in study and prayer in Paris in the house of the Jesuits, to whom he left his large collection of books. He died in 1721. His speculative development is characterised by his youthful adherence to Cartesianism and its subsequent rejection, resulting in an open philosophical scepticism and religious fideism (according to Bartholmess, the sceptical abbot who speaks in the article *Pyrrhon* in Bayle's *Dictionnaire* is a representation of Huet).

2.2.2. Huet wrote numerous literary and historical works which testify to the great variety of his interests: *Carmina latina et graeca* (Utrecht, 1664); *Traité de l'origine des romans* (Paris, 1670 [facs. repr., Stuttgart 1966]; Paris, 1799 [facs. repr., Geneva, 1970]); modern ed., Amsterdam, 1942; Paris, 1971; modern Italian trans., Turin, 1977); *Animadversiones ad Manilium* (notes to an edition of the *Astronomica*) (Paris, 1679); *De la situation du Paradis terrestre* (Paris, 1691); *De navigationibus Salomonis* (Amsterdam, 1698); *Notae in Anthologiam Epigrammatum Graecorum* (Utrecht, 1700); *Les origines de la ville de Caen* (Caen, 1702); *Lettre à Monsieur Peraut sur le parallèle des Anciens et des Modernes* (Paris, 1704); *Histoire des commerces et de la navigation des anciens* (Paris, 1716); *Mémoires sur le commerce des Hollandois dans tous les états et empires du monde* (Amsterdam, 1717); *Commentarius de rebus ad eum pertinentibus* (Amsterdam, 1718); *Diane de Castro* (Paris, 1728).

In the field of the history of religion, theology, and philosophy, Huet published first of all the methodological work, *De interpretatione* (Paris, 1661), and an edition of Origen's *Commentaria in Sacram Scripturam* (Rouen, 1668; cf. *Patrologia Graeca*, XVII, cols. 633–1284), followed by his major works: *Demonstratio evangelica* (Paris, 1679); *Censura philosophiae Cartesianae* (Paris, 1689; Kampen, 1690 [facs. repr., Hildesheim – New York, 1971]), to which Régis provided a *Réponse* in 1691; *Alnetanae quaestiones de concordia rationis et fidei* (Paris, 1690); *Nouveaux mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du Cartésianisme* (Paris, 1692; despite the title, this is not a historical work but a satire of Cartesianism). The writing of the *Traité philosophique de la foiblesse de l'esprit humain*, which appeared posthumously in Paris in 1722 (edited by the abbé d'Olivet) and Amsterdam in 1723 (facs. repr. Hildesheim and New York, 1974), has been dated to the same period as the *Alnetanae quaestiones*; it was republished in London "chez Jean Nourse" in 1741 and translated into several languages (German trans.: Frankfurt am M., 1724; Italian: Padua, 1725 [Venice, 1757[2]; modern Italian trans.: *Trattato filosofico sulla debolezza dello spirito umano*, ed. G. Bentivegna, Catania, 1999]; English: *A Philosophical Treatise Concerning the Weakness of Human Understanding* (London, 1725; Paperback ed., 2010); the Latin version *De imbecillitate mentis humanae libri tres*, was published in Amsterdam in 1738). The same abbé d'Olivet published the collection *Huetiana ou pensées diverses de M. Huet* in Paris in 1722.

None of the works quoted above is essentially a history of philosophy, however they have many interesting connections with a general treatment of the history of philosophy. In the *Demonstratio evangelica* (an apology of Christianity *more geometrico* based on a comparison between the Bible and the ancient pagan religions) the first volume often refers to the theme of the origins of knowledge and its transmission from the Orient to Greece: Mosaic religion spread first among the Egyptians and then, through them and the Phoenician Mochus, on to Greece, whose gods Apollo and Bacchus are none other than the Greek representations of Moses, just like the Syriac Ado and the Egyptian Anubis; Democritus was a pupil of Mochus, while the Brahmans received the doctrine of metempsychosis from Egypt... The second of the three books of the *Alnetanae quaestiones* in turn is devoted to a *Comparatio dogmatum Christianorum et Ethnicorum*, which makes a historical review of philosophical as well as religious themes according to the classical scheme of the *placita* (*De Deo*, *De Dei attributis*, *De origine mundi*, *De conflagratione et renovatione mundi* ...). At the beginning of the first book Huet had already illustrated the "origin of the three-fold philosophy, Dogmatic, Socratic, and Sceptic", using the metaphor of "the light which first shines in our minds", the "subsequent obscurity, which attenuates and diminishes that light", and "finally the faintness and weakness of that light which is opposed to this obscurity" (*Alnetanae quaestiones*, Frankfurt-Leipzig 1719, p. 9; the *Comparatio* is found on pp. 71–244 and, though it demonstrates great erudition, is at times weak in its argumentation). In a perspective no longer based on the history of religion but on that of philosophy, the references to the philosophies of the past in the first book of the *Traité philosophique* become an *excursus* into the history of philosophy in its own right: after having set out in as many chapters twelve proofs of a theoretical nature (taken from gnoseology, logic, and metaphysics) to confirm the theory that human reason cannot attain the truth with certainty, Huet puts forward a proof of a historical nature in Chapter XIV, by "reconstructing" the philosophies of the past in a sceptical key, under the title *The Law of Doubting was Established by Excellent Philosophers*. In the Italian version of the *Traité*, used here, this chapter takes up 60 pages out of a total of 227 *(Trattato filosofico della debolezza dello spirito umano* [...], *tradotto* [...] *da* Antonio Minunni (Venice, 1757), 12°, pp. 69–129).

2.2.3. The fideistic scepticism of the *Traité philosophique*, already present or at least implicit in Huet's previous works, constitutes the final result of a consideration of the relationship between reason and faith which Huet carried out in a strict, polemical comparison with Cartesian rationalism, which he had once asserted and which had then revealed itself, with Spinoza above all, to be a threat to religious faith. The principle of the radical inadequacy of reason is also stressed in the premise to the *excursus* on the history of philosophy, in which Huet points out that "a number of clever, intelligent men, having recognised how the human intellect is wrapped in darkness and how the things that surround man are immerged in such a profound night, and having observed at the same time that the principal reason for the errors to which man is subject comes from the rashness and the great haste with which they walk through rough places, [...] have judged it proper to moderate themselves

and to cease this thoughtless impetuosity of their spirit". After a careful evaluation of the "nature of their body and their intellect and of the things outside", they have reached the conclusion through experience "that the only way of avoiding error is to suspend their belief". The assumption of this "method of doubting" is at the origin of philosophy, distinguishing the "intelligent man" from the "coarse man", the philosopher, who knows he knows nothing, from the ignorant man, who instead does not. This concept of philosophy is connected to the meaning Huet attributes to his investigation into the doctrines of the past: "If we wish therefore to go over the history of philosophy from its first origins up until today, in such a great diversity of opinions we will find that those excellent characters who were the Authors – if you make an exception of a very small number of them – all agreed on this point, that the truth is hidden, that the sense and the intellect are deceptive and weak, and that this intellect is in a profound ignorance of all things" (*Trattato filosofico*, pp. 71–72). In the chapter which follows the review of the history of philosophy, Huet reaches the conclusion that "doubting is the only way of avoiding errors" and that only the Academics and the Sceptics deserve the name of philosophers. In the second book of the *Traité philosophique*, he seems however to tend towards eclecticism and exalts the "free and easy way of philosophizing" which was proper to the sect of the eclectics, which is made to include Plato and Cicero, Lactantius and Origen (pp. 166–172). Immediately afterwards he also rejects this qualification and answers the question of "what we are" that we must be neither Academics nor Sceptics, Eclectics, nor members of any other sect: he proclaims that "we are our own men, that is to say free", and that we must not submit our spirit to any authority. From the point of view of Huet, who considers faith as "the most legitimate way of philosophizing", even philosophical scepticism with its repercussions on the history of thought is a purely instrumental fact: the fundamental interest behind his attitude is neither historical nor philosophical, but religious.

2.2.4. *Traité philosophique de la foiblesse de l'esprit humain*

2.2.4.1. Chapter XIV of the *Traité philosophique* is divided into 65 paragraphs of varying length, from a few lines to 5–6 pages; the titles of the paragraphs are indicated in the summary placed at the beginning of the chapter and they refer mostly to individual philosophers. The discussion is preceded by a brief introduction (*Trattato filosofico*, pp. 71–73) and has no notes; the text contains some bibliographical references, but only occasionally and not systematically.

2.2.4.2. The review of the writers who affirm the "law of doubting" is not confined to a history of Academic or Pyrrhonian Scepticism, but embraces the entire course of ancient and a part of medieval philosophy, starting with Anacharsis and reaching the Arabs. The picture of the history of philosophy which results is divided into five parts, in which the traditional scheme of periodization is adapted to the theoretical requirements outlined above. The first part of this chapter (§ 1–17, pp. 73–80) includes a series of thinkers from the origins up to Aristotle, distributed according to sect (Anacharsis, Pherecydes, Pythagoras, Empedocles, Gorgias, Xenophanes, Epicharmus, Parmenides, Xeniades, Zeno of Elea, Heraclitus,

Anaxagoras, Democritus, Protagoras, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle). Huet explicitly declares that he has excluded the most ancient writers from his discussion, such as Homer and the Seven Wise Men (with the exception of Anacharsis), since "these borrowed authorities serve more for ostentation than for truth" (p. 72). The second part (§ 18–25, pp. 80–91) is a history of the Middle and New Academy, from Arcesilaus up to his Roman followers (Cicero, Varro, Lucullus, and Brutus). The third part (§ 26–52, pp. 91–124) is devoted to the Sceptical school, from Pyrrho to the time of the emperor Justinian, and it deals with the question of the relationship between the Old and the New Academy and between the latter and Pyrrhonism. The fourth part (§ 53–58, pp. 124–126) includes some writers who, although "dogmatics", recognised the limits of human knowledge: these are exponents of the minor Socratic schools, plus Porphyry and Erillus of Carthage, a follower of Zeno the Stoic. The last part (§ 59–65, pp. 126–129) is reserved for the "foreign nations" where the most ancient sages such as the Magi, the Gymnosophists, and the Brahmans are placed alongside the Turkish sect of the "Astounded", Hebrew thinkers (from the Essenes to Maimonides), and the Arabic "Reasoners" mentioned more than once in the writings of Averroes and Maimonides. In this division of the subject matter there is no reference to the Fathers, the Scholastics, or modern thinkers.

2.2.4.3. The historiographical position which underpins the entire discussion is represented by the "continuity" of the sceptical or at least the critical attitude, which is identified with philosophizing *tout court*, as we have seen in para 2.2.3. Huet stresses the key figures who have influenced the development of this attitude: if the mythical Anacharsis proclaimed "that there is no rule of truth or *criterium*", Protagoras "was the first to establish the method of defending two contrary opinions on any subject"; Socrates "that illustrious author of the art of doubting, later took the same road and caused it to be much trodden"; Arcesilaus in turn "revived that law of doubting all things, which had been put forward by Socrates, and which was almost annihilated in his time" and went further than Socrates himself, affirming that we cannot even say we know nothing; Arcesilaus reformed the Academy, influenced by Pyrrho, who "gave the final touch" to the art of doubting (pp. 73, 76–78, 80–81, 93). The Pyrrhonian sect did not end after Timon, but there was a "continual succession" up until Sextus Empiricus and beyond. Nor were those Sceptics of the "foreign nations" devoid of links with the ancient Greek philosophers, since Anaxarchus and Pyrrho – according to what Diogenes Laertius recounts – "learnt from the Magi and the Gymnosophists of the Indies that excellent method of philosophizing which forbids us from believing that anything can be understood and from giving our consent to anything" (pp. 115–116, 126). This last reference reflects the traditional idea of the derivation of Greek philosophy from the Orient.

Within this general perspective, Huet goes on to systematically assimilate to scepticism a large number of Greek writers: Pythagoras declared that only God possessed wisdom, Zeno of Elea and Heraclitus agreed in stating that "we must suspend belief"; against those who held that Socrates used doubt for irony or modesty, or as a tool for "destroying the vanity of the Sophists", Huet points out that Socrates

recognised his ignorance even when discussing with his close friends and with "grave and serious people", quite unlike the Sophists. Plato, "taught by Socrates the art of doubting", only admitted knowledge of the probable, reserving knowledge of the truth for the gods. The thinkers of the Ancient Academy deviated from this correct attitude, as they "planted systems, designs, and rules of doctrine, and neglecting the precept of Socrates, their first master, [. . .] established laws for teaching and for learning, and even dared to pronounce dogmas" (pp. 78–79). Huet even attempts to make Aristotle a sceptic by observing that "there are many treatises in his works, and principally in his metaphysical books, which, although they do not block the path to truth, do not allow the search for it unless that search should begin with doubt, and after having shown the difficulty of such a search, he even let slip that there is no difference between firm opinion and science. From which it follows that since all men's opinions are uncertain, so are all their sciences". As for the relationship between the Middle and New Academy and Pyrrhonism, Huet examines, in the wake of Sextus Empiricus, the "differences" between these two schools, and concludes that they constitute a single sect (pp. 79–80, 105–114). Towards the end of the chapter the band of "sympathisers" with scepticism is further enlarged with members from "dogmatism" itself: "After having reviewed the sect of the philosophers who want us to doubt everything, and who forbid us from affirming anything, let us return now to the Dogmatics. And without speaking of the Stoics, who prostitute their belief to the point of making them the nonsense of old women, they nevertheless forbade their followers from forming too hurried judgements, and gave a convenient name to this caution, which they called *Aproptosia*, and they diligently recommended it; let us move on to receive from others a confession of their ignorance, and principally to Porphyry, who [. . .] openly recognised in his book *De anima*, which he addressed to Boethius [!], that there is nothing certain in philosophy, and that all things are doubtful". But there is more: even Aristippus of Cyrene, "who was much more ancient that Porphyry, and Aristo of Chios after him, taught that Physics is incomprehensible and is above us; that we have no interest in Logic, but only in Morality, and not even in all Morality . . ." (p. 124).

2.2.4.4. Huet adopts the method of the sects, but his identification of the history of philosophy with that of Scepticism leads him to a sort of historiography by theory, inspired by categories of a speculative and not a historical nature. His treatment is not uniform: when mentioning the philosophers who do not belong to scepticism properly speaking he limits himself to quoting one or more of their sayings removed from the context of their doctrines, while when presenting the major sceptics he dwells on their theories and also provides some information on their lives. We find a curious application of the sceptical method to historical inquiry in the case of the distinction between Sextus Empiricus and Sextus of Cheronea: Huet sets out the arguments of those who maintain the existence of two different people and then confutes them one by one in the name of the principle of doubting everything (pp. 118–123). His principal sources are Diogenes Laertius, and Sextus Empiricus, who are rarely quoted however; other sources to which Huet refers are Plato, Strabo, Philo of Alexandria, Cicero, Cornelius Celsus, Seneca (*Ep*. 89 is quoted more than

once), Aulus Gellius, Pomponius Mela, Eusebius, Agathias Scholasticus, Suda, and Maimonides.

2.2.5. Huet's philosophical and theological works enjoyed wide circulation, even outside France (the young Vico, for example, knew his works, and the *Demonstratio evangelica* was used by Valletta concerning the relationship between Moses and Mochus), but they were also much criticised for some of their fantastic and ambiguous comparisons between Christianity and the pagan mythologies and for having led the opposition to Cartesianism onto the treacherous ground of that "Pyrrhonism" which was the favourite weapon of the "atheists" and libertines. In particular, the *Traité philosophique*, whose attribution to Huet was immediately contested by some, provoked lively reactions among both Catholics and Protestants. The criticism did not only focus on Huet's speculative positions, but also on the treatment of the history of philosophy which he used to support his fundamental theory. In the *Mémoires de Trévoux*, after casting doubt on Huet's authorship of the *Traité philosophique* and noting, among other things, that the work is "nothing but a reheating of Sextus Empiricus and some ancient rhetors who have given no other proof of their philosophizing and reasoning than their insolence in contradicting the philosophers", *père* du Cerceau presents the *excursus* into the history of philosophy as "an undigested compilation of passages and authors" and stresses the inconsistent nature of the treatment: "The amazing thing is that this writer, immediately after having represented all the philosophers as totally in contrast to one another [in the previous proof it is maintained that the disagreements between the 'dogmatics' show that we must not adhere to any sect], now presents them re-united to give some foundation to his scepticism". As for the enlargement of the list of sceptics in the *Traité*, the reviewer comments ironically: "You see, if we wish to believe him, the only one who is not a sceptic is Epicurus and you cannot believe in God unless you are an Epicurean" (MT, XLII, 1725, pp. 994, 1014–1015). The Arminian (and Cartesian) Pierre de Crousaz, in his confutation of the *Traité philosophique*, placed at the end of the *Examen du Pyrrhonisme* quoted above, contests the method used by Huet in his "proofs of authority", which have no philosophical value as the "dogmatics" could bring forward as many proofs and more. De Crousaz observes that this list of "patrons of Pyrrhonism" is the fruit of prevention and sectarianism and, in detail, rejects the fact that philosophers such as Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato are qualified as sceptics (*Examen du Pyrrhonisme*, p. 764). As for Socrates, he refers to other sections of the *Examen*, where Huet had held the opposite theory, namely that when he spoke "seriously", Socrates tackled themes such as the existence of God, providence, or the need for a virtuous life, with full conviction. De Crousaz interprets Socrates's doubt as a means of confusing the Sophists, masters of the dispute, and of making us arrive at the truth by ourselves. The founder of Pyrrhonism is therefore not Socrates, but Arcesilaus, who "abusing Socrates's example only thought of contradicting it", thus forfeiting any hope of knowing the truth" (*Examen du Pyrrhonisme*, pp. 18 and 61).

In Italy, it was Muratori who took up his pen against the *Traité philosophique*. In his little treatise *Delle forze dell'intendimento umano* (1745), the great polygraph

devoted six pages to a presentation and a criticism of Chapter XIV of the *Traité philosophique*, denouncing the confusion Huet brought to "unlettered readers" by "such a great apparatus of Masters or Protectors of his Scepticism", in such a way that "many other philosophers who were clearly Dogmatics" end up next to the true Academics, Sceptics, and Pyrrhonists: "if they doubted many things which are in fact disputable, and if they confessed they did not know many others, however they established a very large number of doctrines in Physics, Morals, Metaphysics, and Theology". He stops in particular to contest the placing among the sceptics of "five of the most illustrious Philosophers of Antiquity": Pythagoras, Democritus, Socrates, Plato (regarding whom G.F. Pico's *Examen vanitatis* is also quoted as a source), and Aristotle, defined as "one of the greatest and most ingenious Dogmatics Philosophy has ever had, even though some of his Dogmas do not appear to be so solid today" (Muratori, *Delle forze dell'intendimento umano*, pp. 50–55; an analogous observation was to be made by Franck in his *Dictionnaire des sciences philosophiques*). But Huet's posthumous work was not without its admirers: the *Bibliothèque françoise* credited it with having "reduced to a system the ideas which those other writers [Montaigne, La Mothe Le Vayer, Bayle] limited themselves to insinuating in passing and not openly"; the part on the history of philosophy is judged to be "particularly suitable to divert those readers who may have been fatigued by the metaphysical ideas", even though "not everyone will approve of the way in which the author has set out the doctrine of the ancient philosophers" (BF, I, 1723, pp. 66, 78–79). For his part, Brucker recognised in the *Demonstratio evangelica*, the *Alnetanae quaestiones*, and the *Traité philosophique* a "great knowledge of ancient philosophical history, disfigured however by many sectarian prejudices" (Brucker, I, p. 37).

More recently, Huet's role in the development of modern philosophical historiography has been underlined by Martial Gueroult in particular, in the relevant chapter of his *Histoire de l'histoire de la philosophie*. In his radical opposition to Cartesianism, the erudite Huet "preserves both the philosophical tradition and the history of philosophy, as he does all of history for that matter, by rejecting, in the name of the primacy of historical certainty, the alleged superiority of mathematical rational dogmatism, and denying, in the name of the contents of the philosophical tradition, the alleged independence and novely of Cartesian philosophy". This "overturning" is kept within the context of Cartesianism, characterised by the antimony between "history" and "philosophy", and is the supreme expression of the "revolt of the humanists and the historians against the proud condemnation" of tradition by the Cartesians. It is therefore a further episode in the *querelle des anciens et des modernes*, in which erudite scepticism, allied to religious apology, attempts to "sacrifice science", just as Descartes had sacrificed history. Gueroult defines Huet's position as "reactionary" and "mediocre" and considers it interesting only "as a symptom", but not in itself, since it ends up by confusing "history" with pure "erudition" and precludes the search for any possible alternative to the contrast between "truth" and "history" (Gueroult, 1, pp. 207, 209, 222–223).

In evaluating the historical *excursus* of the *Traité philosophique* we must bear in mind two aspects of the work's chronological positioning at the turn of the century:

though it was written in the last decade of the seventeenth century, and refers to that battle against rationalism which had also been waged by Foucher (see Chapter 1, Introduction), its publication took place in a period in which, with the disputes over Cartesianism by now placated, the French intellectual climate was dominated by the ideas which circulated as a result of Bayle's *Dictionnaire*, whose sceptical tendencies are of quite a different nature from those which animated Huet. It is on this dual plane that the particular "philosophical use" which Huet makes of the history of human thought must be stressed. The adoption of scepticism as a general criterion for the interpretation of the ancient philosophies marks on one hand a return to a tendency which had already manifested itself in the Renaissance with G. F. Pico and Agrippa of Nettesheim and, on the other, the arrival on the scene of urgent and disturbing speculative motifs in a genre, the history of philosophy, which up until then had been the object of erudite research, didactic compilations, or populisation.

2.2.6. On Huet's life, works, and cultural position: P.D. Huet, *Commentarius de rebus ad eum pertinentibus* (Amsterdam, 1718); BUAM, XXI, pp. 17–22; DThC, VII, cols. 199–201; C. Bartholmess, *Huet, évêque d'Avranches, ou le scepticisme théologique* (Paris, 1850); Bouillier, I, pp. 592–607; A. Dupront, *P.-D. Huet et l'exégèse comparatiste au XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1930); Busson, *La religion des classiques*, pp. 332 ff. and 363–371; L. Tolmer, *P.-D. Huet (1630–1721) humaniste-physicien* (Bayeux, 1949); Vernière, *Spinoza et la pensée française*, I, pp. 227 ff.; Spink, *passim*; M.-T. Dougnac, "Un évêque bibliophile au dix-septième siècle. Huet et ses livres", in *Humanisme actif. Mélanges d'art et de littérature offerts à Julien Cain* (Paris, 1968), II, pp. 45–55; G.M. Sciacca, *Scetticismo cristiano* (Palermo, 1968); P.G. Nonis, "Scettico Huet", *Studia Patavina*, XXI (1974), pp. 80–105; A.M. Alberti, "Lo scetticismo apologetico di P.-D. Huet", GCFI, LVII (1978), pp. 210–237; Walker, *The Ancient Theology*, pp. 214–220; G. Malbreil, "Les droits de la raison et de la foi. La dissociation de la raison, la métamorphose de la foi, selon P.-D. Huet", *XVIIe siècle*, XXXVII (1985), pp. 119–133; Id., "Descartes censuré par Huet", *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger*, CLXXXI (1991), pp. 311–328; A. McKenna, "Pascal et Huet", *XVIIe siècle*, XXXVII (1985), pp. 135–142; G. Rodis-Lewis, "Huet lecteur de Malebranche", *XVIIe siècle*, XXXVII (1985), pp. 169–189; A. Dini, "Anticartesianesimo e apologetica in P.-D. Huet", *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa*, XXIII (1987), pp. 222–239; G. Paganini, *Scepsi moderna*, pp. 314–334; R.H. Popkin, "Bishop P.-D. Huet's Remarks on Malebranche", in *Nicolas Malebranche. His Philosophical Critics and Successors*, ed. S. Brown (Assen, 1991), pp. 1–21; *P.-D. Huet, 1630–1721*, ed. S. Guelloz (Paris, 1994); E. Mazza, "Hume e Huet", *Studi settecenteschi*, XIV (1994), pp. 183–211; J.R. Maia Neto and R.H. Popkin, "Bishop P.-D. Huet's Remarks on Pascal", *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, III (1995), pp. 147–160; E. Rapetti, *P.-D. Huet: erudizione, filosofia, apologetica* (Milan, 1999); Ead., *Percorsi anticartesiani nelle lettere a P.-D. Huet* (Florence, 2003); J. Boch, *Les dieux désenchantés. La fable dans la pensée française de Huet à Voltaire* (Paris, 2002); A. Del Prete, "Per la datazione del *Traité de l'infini créé*. Ricerche sulla biblioteca di P.-D. Huet",

Rivista di storia della filosofia, LVIII (2003), pp. 713–717; Th.M. Lennon, "Huet, Malebranche and the Birth of Skepticism", in *The Return of Scepticism from Hobbes and Descartes to Bayle*, ed. G. Paganini (Dordrecht-Boston-London, 2003), pp. 149–165; M. Lærke, "À la recherche d'un homme égal à Spinoza. G.W. Leibniz et la *Demonstratio evangelica* de Huet", *XVIIe siècle*, LVIII (2006), pp. 387–410; W. Wilkin, "Renaissance Historiography and Novel Anthropology in Huet's *De l'origine des romans* (1660)", *Studi francesi*, XL (2006), pp, 466–477; Th. M. Lennon, *The Plain Truth: Descartes, Huet, and Skepticism* (Leiden, 2008).

On the fortune of the *Traité philosophique*: BAM, XVIII (1722), pp. 455–465; BF, I (1723), pp. 65–86; VIII (1726), pp. 42–74 and 317–340; X (1727), pp. 49–142; XI (1727), pp. 31–35; MT, XLII (1725), pp. 989–1021; BI, V (1729), p. 296; de Crousaz, *Examen du Pyrrhonisme*, pp. 747–776; J. Egger, *De viribus mentis humanae, disquisitio philosophica Anti-Huetiana: in qua Tractatus [. . .] P.D. Huetii [. . .] de debilitate mentis humanae expenditur et refutatur* (Bern, 1735), in particular pp. 195–218; L.A. Muratori, *Delle forze dell'intendimento umano, o sia il Pirronismo confutato. Trattato* [. . .] *opposto al libro del preteso Monsig. Huet intorno alla debolezza dell'umano intendimento* (Venice, 1756[3]), in particular pp. 50–55; F. Nicolini, *La giovinezza di G.B. Vico* (Naples, 1932), p. 65 (on Vico's interest in Huet).

On the criticism: Brucker, I, p. 37; IV, pp. 552–574; Degérando, I, pp. 130–131; DSPh, III, p. 125; Garin, *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo*, pp. 108 and 237; Braun, pp. 141–142; Del Torre, p. 62; Dagen, *L'histoire de l'esprit humain*, pp. 114, 119–120, 321; Gueroult, 1, pp. 207–223; Bonacina, *Filosofia ellenistica e cultura moderna*, pp. 37–41; Azouvi, *Descartes et la France*, pp. 31, 49, 54, 70, 75–76.

2.3 François Fénelon (1651–1715)

Abrégé des vies des anciens philosophes

2.3.1. François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon was born in the manor house of Fénelon, in Périgord in 1651 and entered the Seminary of Saint-Sulpice at an early age. From 1678 to 1689 he was the superior of the *Nouvelles Catholiques*, the girls' school for young Protestants who had converted to Catholicism. In 1689 he was appointed tutor to the three sons of the *Grand Dauphin* and he distinguished himself in the education of the eldest, Louis, Duke of Burgundy. He became a member of the *Académie française* in 1693 and 2 years later was appointed Archbishop of Cambrai. The doctrinal controversy over "quietism" which placed him in conflict with Bossuet, and the covert criticism of the policies of Louis XIV contained in his *Télémaque* led to Fénelon's disgrace, and he retired to Cambrai, devoting himself to pastoral care up until his death in 1715.

2.3.2. Fénelon's vast production includes among other things several famous pedagogical and literary works: *Traité de l'éducation des filles* (Paris, 1689), *Les aventures de Télémaque* (1699), *Dialogues des morts* (1712), *Lettre sur les occupations de l'Académie française* (1716), and the *Dialogues sur l'éloquence* (1718).

In the field of philosophy and theology he wrote the *Lettres sur divers sujets de métaphysique* and a *Réfutation du système de Malebranche sur la nature et la grâce* (1843); an *Explication des maximes des saints* (1697) on "quietism", condemned by the Holy Office in 1699; and the *Traité de l'existence de Dieu* (1712). Fénelon is also attributed with a work on the history of philosophy which came out posthumously, entitled *Abrégé des vies des anciens philosophes, avec un recueil de leurs plus belles maximes, par* M.D.F. (Paris: chez Jacques Estienne, 1726, 12°, pp. vii–495), edited by the Jesuit Jean-Antoine Du Cerceau. The initial *Avertissement* informs us that the manuscript of the work was given to the editor by someone defined merely as "M. le Duc de C***", alleged proof that the work was written by Fénelon. Its printing caused a literary *querelle*, since André-Michel de Ramsay, Fénelon's follower and biographer, denied the attribution because of the difference in style between the *Abrégé* and the *Télémaque*. J. Baudouin was of the opposite opinion, and quoted as proof the curriculum that the abbé Quinot had devised for the sons of the Duc de Beauvilliers which included, in the holidays, half an hour's reading from the *Lives of the philosophers* by Diogenes Laertius, Eunapius, and the "Seigneur de Cambrai", namely Fénelon. This curriculum, according to Baudouin, received Fénelon's own approval, who noted in his own hand that "the lives of the philosophers deserve a place in studies conducted seriously", but he did not correct the attribution of the *Abrégé* to himself, an obvious sign that he recognised it as his own. Ramsay replied by quoting the opinion of the bishop of Saintes, according to whom the author of the *Abrégé* was a certain Rotrou, whom Fénelon employed on more than one occasion to compile abstracts for his royal pupils. The theory which prevailed was that this work, which Fénelon left in a rough version, was prepared for publication by Du Cerceau, who added the lives of Socrates and Plato, absent from the original. The *Abrégé des vies des anciens philosophes* was in any case added to the various editions of Fénelon's *Oeuvres*; it was also reprinted 23 times up until 1875 and was translated into English (1726; another 6 editions up until 1840), German (1748, 1761, 1796), Spanish (1825), Greek (1837, 1842), and even Arabic (1837). The edition of the *Abrégé* printed in Paris in 1822 includes an appendix entitled *Abrégé de la vie des femmes philosophes de l'antiquité* (pp. 311–340), a collection of 17 profiles taken from the work of the same name by Ménage (see above, Chapter 1, para 1.6).

2.3.3. Written for educational purposes, the *Abrégé* is devoid of any theoretical references to the history of philosophy. It is interesting however to refer to the opinions on historiography in general expressed in the famous *Lettre* to the *Académie française*, in which, after stressing the need for the historian to be impartial and balanced, Fénelon makes a clear distinction between history and erudition: the historian "does not omit any fact which could serve to depict the principal men and discover the causes of events; but he eliminates every dissertation which makes a show of the erudition of the learned. [. . .] He who is more learned (*savant*) than he is historical (*historien*), and who possesses more criticism than true genius, will not spare his reader any piece of information, any superfluous circumstance, any dry and unconnected fact; he follows his own taste without consulting that of the public.

[. . .] A sober and discrete historian, on the other hand, leaves aside those minute facts which do not lead the reader anywhere important. [. . .] The essential point is to place the reader in the middle of things, and to hasten to make him reach the conclusion (*dénoument*). On this point history must be a bit like the epic poem" (*Lettre sur les occupations de l'Académie française*, in F. Fénelon, *Œuvres*, III, Paris, 1835, p. 240).

2.3.4. *Abrégé des vies des anciens philosophes*

2.3.4.1. The *Abrégé* is divided into 26 chapters, which correspond to as many ancient philosophers placed in chronological order, from Thales and the Seven Wise Men to Zeno the Stoic. It has no introduction or notes, except for a few references to the classical poets. In the edition used here (*Oeuvres*, III, Paris 1835, pp. 268–343) the text takes up 75 octavo pages.

2.3.4.2. The work is structured according to the chronological succession of the philosophers and has no elements of periodization.

2.3.4.3. The author's aim is not to trace the development of the history of philosophy, but to offer a series of "medallions" or portraits, in which the moral teaching that emerges from the personalities and the behaviour of the ancient philosophers is united to some initial information on their maxims and doctrines, while young readers are entertained by the large number of anecdotes expressed in a style which is fluent and agreeable. This educational and populist aim is reflected, for example, in the stress placed on the moral qualities of control over the passions, frugality, and continence, or the space devoted to the treatment of writers such as Diogenes the Cynic, which are rich in anecdotes (pp. 319–327), or Solon, a particularly interesting figure from an ethical and political point of view, well-known through Plutarch's *Lives* (pp. 270–277). There is a particularly lengthy discussion of Epicurus's thought (pp. 332–339), also based on Lucretius (the author carefully summarizes the second part of the fifth book of *De rerum naturae*, on the origins of human civilization). Other philosophers receive a shorter treatment (3–4 pages each for Plato and Aristotle).

2.3.4.4. The individual profiles follow a fixed scheme: date of birth or acme, place of birth, information on their life and character, list of doctrines and maxims, and circumstances surrounding their death. The author has selected and simplified the model of Laertius' *Lives* (the principal source). The number of philosophers is reduced to 26; there is generally no indication of the sources, or of the writings of the individual philosophers; and the criterion of grouping according to sects is replaced by the more manageable criterion of chronology.

2.3.5. The *Abrégé* was warmly praised by Baudouin, who pointed out that its author "develops with great care and precision the principles of physics and metaphysics of the philosophers", and that "his choice of the maxims of their morals and their politics is particularly suited to educating the heart and the spirit of a prince and a great lord. I have compared these lives", he adds, "with those of Laertius, and the difference, which stands out on a first reading, confirms the positive idea that I had

formed of it" (*Oeuvres*, III, p. 265). The work was also appreciated by the *Mémoires de Trévoux*, which observed among other things that the "judicious" choice of the 26 philosophers, who are mostly the leaders of sects, means that "dans l'abrégé de leur histoire on a proprement l'abrégé de l'ancienne philosophie" (MT, XLV, 1726, p. 2095). Tennemann included the German edition of 1796 in his systematic bibliography, placing it among the "Histories of particular epochs" (Tennemann, p. 20). These favourable opinions are confirmed by the editorial fortune of the work, which was notable above all in the first half of the nineteenth century. Fénelon's literary fame undoubtedly helped to keep the *Abrégé* in circulation, and it enjoyed a much longer lasting and greater success than the manuals on the history of philosophy compiled in Germany in the early eighteenth century. Although it is devoid of interest from the point of view of historical research, the *Abrégé des vies des anciens philosophes* is worth considering because it marks the addition of the literary genre of the history of philosophy (in its classic form of "lives" and "sayings") to the *ratio studiorum* of "princes and great lords" at the end of the seventeenth century, and subsequently throughout the course of the nineteenth, to the programme of instructive reading for entire generations of young students.

2.3.6. On Fénelon's life, works, and speculative orientation: A.-M. de Ramsay, *Histoire de la vie de F. Fénelon* (The Hague, 1723); F. Fénelon, *Oeuvres* (Paris, 1835), III, pp. 264–267 (which includes the history of the *Abrégé's* controversial attribution); DSPh, II, pp. 392–396; E. Carcassonne, *Fénelon: l'homme et l'oeuvre* (Paris, 1946); J.-L. Goré, *L'itinéraire de Fénelon. Humanisme et spiritualité* (Paris, 1957); H. Gouhier, *Fénelon philosophe* (Paris, 1977); H. Hillenaar, *Le secret de Fénelon* (Paris, 1994); D. Leduc-Fayette, *Fénelon et l'amour de Dieu* (Paris, 1996); *Fénelon: philosophie et spiritualité*, ed. D. Leduc-Fayette (Geneva, 1996); *Nouvel état présent des travaux sur Fénelon*, ed. H. Hillenaar (Amsterdam, 2000); "Fénelon", *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'étranger*, CXXVIII (2003), 2; *Correspondance de Fénelon*, 18 Vols (Paris and Geneva, 1972–2007).

On his fortune: JS, LXXIX (1726), pp. 493–509; LXXX (1726), pp. 419–420 (Ramsay's letter); MT, XLV (1726), pp. 2092–2098; BF, VII (1726), pp. 205–215; VIII (1726), pp. 34–42 (J. Baudoin's letter to the editor of the *Abrégé*); Degérando, I, p. 134; Tennemann, p. 20; for the general background see also A. Chérel, *Fénelon au XVIIIe siècle en France (1715–1820). Son prestige, son influence* (Paris, 1917):

On the criticism: Braun, p. 144 note.

2.4 Dupont-Bertris

Éloges et caractères des philosophes les plus célèbres

2.4.1. We have no information on this writer, no trace of whom has been found in biographical repertories.

2.4.2. The surname "Du Pont Bertris", with no forename, appears as a signature at the bottom of the dedicatory letter which precedes the anonymous work *Éloges*

et caractères des philosophes les plus célèbres, depuis la naissance de Jésus-Christ jusqu'à present (Paris: chez Henry-Simon-Pierre Gissey, 1726, 12°, xii (not numbered)–478 pp.). On the basis of this Barbier attributes the work to "Dupont-Bertres ou Dupont-Bertris", and it is registered under this last name in the catalogue of the *Bibl. Nationale*. In an appendix to the *Éloges et caractères* (pp. 450–478) the author has published some Latin poetry, "to sound out the public's taste as to my versifying", as he notes at the end of the *Avertissement*: this is a letter in the style of Horace (*Disquiritur utrum praestet in omnibus scientiis esse mediocriter versatum, quam in aliqua versatissimum*), a number compositions on astronomical themes (*De orbis structura*, *De partibus quibus constat orbis*, *De partium ordine quibus constat orbis*, *De motu corporum coelestium*), an *Elegia, qua fuse describitur caesus et vindicta hirundinis, cujus nidum, caesis dejectisque pullis, passer invaserat*, and several epigrammes.

2.4.3. In the *Avertissement* Dupont-Bertris presents his work as a supplement to Fénelon's *Abrégé*, which had limited itself to the philosophers who had lived before Christ. Echoing the themes of the *querelle*, he claims the validity of modern philosophers and, at the same time, the usefulness of knowing about them in order to be able to hold up one's head in learned conversations: "The work recently published under the title of *Abrégé des vie des anciens philosophes* attributed to the late M. de Fénelon gave me the idea of writing this book. I belive that the public, already sufficiently educated regarding the most ancient philosophers, would be very happy to be equally so regarding those who have followed them. Would it not be somewhat bizarre to direct our curiosity at the remotest of centuries, and consider with indifference those centuries whose proximity only serves to render our ignorance less excusable? It is true that a long series of past centuries casts a certain majestic halo over the ancient philosophers, which immensely exalts their real merit, and they have become famous to a degree that should really awaken our curiosity towards them. But we must also recognise that their successors, with much surer and perhaps purer knowledge and with a more healthy though less ostentatious morality, always have enough of a reputation to deserve to be known in greater detail. Some of them above all are so often the subject of ordinary conversation that however little we deal with literature we cannot decently remain in ignorance regarding the principal points that concern them" (*Éloges*, *Avertissement*, pp. vii–viii).

2.4.4. *Éloges et caractères des philosophes les plus célèbres*

2.4.4.1. The work opens with an *Epître* to the Duc d'Orléans (pp. iii–vi) and an *Avertissement* (pp. vii–xii), and is structured very simply: it is divided into 15 chapters, the number of philosophers examined, and is devoid of notes and indices; the latter is substituted by a chronological list of philosophers, placed on the back of the frontispiece.

2.4.4.2. Built as a succession of profiles or "medallions" in their own right, Dupont-Bertris' work does not have a scheme of periodization. Of the philosophers chosen, two are Roman (Seneca and Plutarch), six from the Arab and Latin Middle Ages (Avicenna, Abelard, Averroes, Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas,

and Duns Scotus), one from the Renaissance (Cardano), and six from the modern age (Gassendi, Descartes, Maignan, Pascal, Malebranche, and Leibniz); notable is the absence from this picure of any of the Fathers. The division of the entire history of philosophy into three epochs (ancient, medieval, and modern), characterised respectively by the development of morality, logic and metaphysics, and physics, transpires from what the author observes regarding Avicenna: "It is above all in logic and metaphysics that Avicenna excelled. His acute and at the same time profound spirit made him particularly suited to these two parts of philosophy, which were the only ones cultivated in those times with some success, since we must go back to the ancient philosophers to find an age in which morality flourished, and we much go forward to modern times to find that of a soundly-based physics brought to a high degree of perfection" (*Éloges*, pp. 69–70).

2.4.4.3. In the series of historical profiles outlined by Dupont-Bertris we find several themes, at times recurrent, from which we can grasp the general lines of interpretation which inspire the author. These are themes which prelude the cultural orientation of the early Enlightenment, from the already present awareness of the distance from the ancients to the interest in mathematical sciences, the stress placed on reason and the rejection of prejudice, to the attention to the moral aspect and "public utility". "It was Descartes", notes the author, who gave "the first impulse to everything in the Republic of Letters, and thanks to a happy revolution [. . ..] all the sciences have begun to change their face from his time. Esteem for the ancients went so far that people limited themselves to understanding them properly, convinced that it was not possible for man to find anything that was unknown to them. Descartes put an end to this mistake and taught us not to admit in natural knowledge any other yoke than that of reason, depite the strongest, consolidated blind assumptions" (pp. 289–290). The author had already expressed himself against historical prejudices, declaring that "only a prejudiced spirit and an inflamed imagination can make us believe that the works of Averroes make their readers impious". As for the reputation which Albert the Great had enjoyed in the past, he warns that the opinion of "modern critics" is very different, as these critics "examine everything on the scales of reason, without conceding anything to blind assumptions"; and after quoting the abbé Fleury's negative opinion of Albert, the author insists: "Let us strip ourselves of all prejudice with regard to this philosopher, and see what fundamental idea we must have of his works . . ." (pp. 135, 150–152).

The "reason" which Dupont-Bertris appeals to is also balance and moderation; indeed he criticises the excessive vigour which Plutarch used against the Stoics: "He is no longer a philosopher who disputes: he is a prejudiced, biased man, who only esteems the doctrine he has embraced. Herodotus and the Stoics were the two rocks on which Plutarch's moderation foundered. [. . .] We must always stay within the bounds of reason and moderation". The author shows he has applied this maxim personally, since, if in the passages quoted above he clearly takes the side of the "moderns", elsewhere his judgement appears more detached: in the profile of Duns Scotus he hints at the decline of scholastic philosophy and observes that "people like the new, if only because it is new, it being understood that it in turn will also

undergo revolutions. Perhaps those whom we consider to be the oracles of philosophy today will cease to be fashionable without ever having enjoyed all the vogue of their predecessors" (pp. 52 and 218).

One of the most characteristic aspects of Dupont-Bertris' work is the stress it places on geometry, which is coupled with philosophy. "Let us not forget to underline this continual alliance of philosophy with geometry", he urges regarding the geometrical interests of Malebranche. This aspect might seem obvious, given that the modern philosophers examined in the *Éloges* were also mathematicians; but it is interesting to note that this "alliance" also emerges in medieval thought: as we will see later, the author exalts the *esprit géometrique* which dominates the works of Thomas Aquinas, and affirms that "geometry" plays an important role in the works of Duns Scotus (pp. 190, 222, 401). As for Dupont-Bertris's sensitivity to the moral dimension, this is already evident in the *Avertissement*, where he states that he has given space in his work "both to the philosophers who have distinguished themselves in ethics and those who have distinguished themselves in some other part of philosophy. It seems indeed, taking into account the idea annexed to the term philosopher, that in a [possible] examination, the former should be accorded preference". Morality is conceived of in terms of "public utility": Dupont-Bertris writes, for example, that "Plutarch's maxim was not a speculative maxim, which does not lead to anything; he got down to practice. [. . .] To judge from the popular way in which his works were written, he has merely sought public utility". His maxims "aim to make us sensitive to the evils of others, keep us united, arm us with zeal for the public interest, always making virtue triumph". These qualities are also stressed in Leibniz, whose political commitment is appreciated; the *Theodicy* itself is identified with his "zeal for public utility", since "the way in which the origin of evil is explained can influence our conduct greatly" (pp. xi, 37, 430–432, 439–440).

These proto-Enlightenment themes are far from any radicalism of a libertine nature, and are indeed accompanied by an attitude of religious conformism. Dupont-Bertris notes that Gassendi "conserved great religious sentiments all his life", and he rejects any doubts over the religiosity of Descartes "who in his behaviour and in his writings always testified to his great submission to the Church", as in the case of his failure to publish the *Traité du monde* following the condemnation of Galileo. Dupont-Bertris dwells in particular over Leibniz's religious attitude, condemning his excessive tolerance: "Civil society, however it is considered, is not suited to an indifference to religion, whose cult is in itself so capable of making there reign among men union, subordination, justice, and charity, and certainly Leibniz took this indifference too far. [. . .] His indolence, if we can speak in this way, his apathy for every type of religion followed him to the grave [there follows an account of how Leibniz died discussing a case of the transformation of iron into gold]. [. . .] He died as he had lived, always insensitive to all that regards religion: this is Leibniz's great sin" (pp. 286, 321–322, 442–447). The author's own religious preoccupations also manifest themselves in his profiles of the ancient thinkers. He observes that in the doctrines of Plutarch "we no longer recognise the pagan philosopher; he is an enlightened and profound theologian, what am I saying?, almost orthodox . . .". Avicenna is said to be "of all the Arabic philosophers he whose principles best

agree with those of our holy religion"; it does not result on the other hand that Averroes "has spoilt any religion [. . .]. He was a philosopher devoted entirely to the lights of his reason"; nevertheless the author points out that "the epithet rascal never suited Averroes". As for Cardano, "this philosopher conceded too much to his natural lights, at times prejudicing the faith, to which they must be subordinate" (pp. 69, 136–138, 247).

Moving on to other historiographical opinions, which it is impossible to place within a thematic analysis, we must note first of all that the writer who receives most space is Leibniz (45 pages); this seems to be due not so much to the natural sympathies of Dupont-Bertris, who indeed expresses his perplexity over the doctrine of pre-established harmony, theodicy, and the theory of the monad ("all this seems very metaphysical and is admitted very gratuitously": p. 420), as to the fact that Leibniz had recently died and his multi-faceted personality was apt to arouse the interest of the average reader. Descartes receives 38 pages, followed in order by Abelard (34), Plutarch (33), Aquinas (32), and Cardano (31); Gassendi is treated less fully (20). In outlining the profile of Seneca, Dupont-Bertris also mentions the theory of his supposed Christianity, noting that this had by that time been superseded (pp. 5–6). It is interesting to note that in dealing with the scholastics the author does not pronounce a global condemnation of the movement. His criticism seems to be concentrated on Albert the Great, whose logic is considered too lengthy and full of subtleties, while his physics often makes use of "principles which, not being either evident or proven, render his conclusions very ambiguous". Aquinas, on the other hand, is the object of praise for the "indestructible solidity" of his thought and above all for the method he uses in works such as the *De ente et essentia*, which is significantly interpreted in a Cartesian key: "The mental characteristic (*le caractère d'esprit*) throughout all these works [. . .] consists of a geometrical spirit. [. . .] What attracts the holy doctor's attention in the first place is the choice of subject, and if contemporary writers had taken care to do the same, they would not have introduced so many frivolous questions into the schools. [. . .] After having determined the subject he wishes to treat, he [. . .] reduces it to all the simplicity possible [. . .] so that the mind can conceive a just and distinct idea of it [. . .] he divides it and subdivides it, in a word he entirely decomposes it, referring every part to its natural place. [. . .] He goes back to primitive knowledge, generally recognised as true among Catholic thinkers [. . .] and establishes it as so many indestructible principles, from which he draws a mass of consequences. [. . .] St. Thomas makes an effort merely to draw immediate conclusions, which always present to the mind the light of evidence, and for this reason he rigorously examines every proposition. [. . .] This is in general the taste spread throughout the works of St. Thomas, a taste which, however, beneath the perfection of that of today, always has a degree of goodness which surprises us if we think of the time in which the holy doctor lived" (pp. 152–154, 186–195).

The presence of Cartesianism as the system of reference and evaluation is also felt in the ironic comment on one of Cardano's theories which fully contradicts the conception of the animal-machine: "He [Cardano] makes the beasts enter a community of understanding with men; an honour which no one had yet thought of granting them, and from which they soon fell, following the resounding revolution which

took place in philosophy towards the middle of the last century" (p. 248). In line with this premises, though also praising the other modern philosophers examined, Dupont-Bertris reserves his greatest praise for Descartes, who is presented with a hint of national pride as a champion of the *esprit françois*: "Here we have the famous Descartes, who for the excellence of his original works has shown all nations how far the French spirit can go in the most sublime and the thorniest of sciences. He is a hero in philosophy and geometry, recognised as such today by all the learned. [. . .] Many writers have already said that Descartes alone made more discoveries than have been made by all the philosophers who came before him put together. They could have added that he has a part, in some way, in all those that have been made subsequently by his successors" (pp. 288–289). But Dupont-Bertris's adherence to Cartesian philosophy is not total, as he recognises "in good faith that some points must be reformed, as for example his alleged geometrical demonstration of the existence of God, etc., and that some others must be suppressed entirely, such as most of his rules of movement". In any case he defends the validity of the Cartesian physical system taken in its entirety: "Some find that it has something of the novel, and seriously maintain that which Decartes only said while laughing, when he called his philosophy the novel of nature. Call it a novel as much as you like, but you must still agree that it is the product of a superior genius, to have been able to contrive a general system of physics so well that it is possible to deduce an explanation for every particular phenomenon of nature. When we only consider certain detached parts of this system, it seems to be based on purely gratuitous suppositions: it is in no way the same thing when it is taken in its entirety" (pp. 290–291, 308–309).

2.4.4.4. Though presenting his work as a continuation of Fénelon's *Abrégé des vies des anciens philosophes*, Dupont-Bertris modifies the traditional genre of the "lives", presenting for each writer the quality of his genius (*esprit*), his character (*coeur*), and his writings, and reducing the biographical element to its most essential, placed at the end of each profile. This innovation is reflected in the title itself, which seems to be inspired by two famous works of the time, La Bruyère's *Caractères* and Fontenelle's *Éloges des académiciens*.[8] The work's populist aim is specifically stressed by the author: "It is dangerous to offend the public taste and, since it is too declaredly the enemy of all that requires mental effort, I have had to set aside any discussion on the particular doctrine of each philosopher. It is enough for me to set out the substance and that which the torrent of most distinguished wise men has thought concerning it, since any greater detail would require many large

[8]Cf. *Éloges et caractères*, *Avertissement*, pp. ix–xi: "Je tâche de faire entrer dans ces *Éloges et caractères* tout ce que le sujet fournit de plus propre à rendre une lecture amusante, curieuse, instructive, pourvu qu'il aille à faire connoître, dans les philosophes dont je parle, les qualitez de leur esprit, ou de leurs ouvrages, ou de leur coeur: car c'est à ces trois points que je m'attache, comme aux seuls intéressans dans la matière présente. Il semble que tout le reste est étranger au philosophe proprement dit, et d'ailleurs on sçait que les vies des sçavans sont trop privées, trop uniformes, trop arides d'événémens, pour mériter le même détail que la vie des autres grands hommes. C'est qui m'a fait substituer les *Éloges et caractères* aux vies que j'eusse dû donner, suivant l'idée de l'ouvrage qui a occasionné celui-ci".

volumes, full of thorny difficulties which no one would want to enter into, save a small number of elect sages whom I am not aiming at". As for the sources, Dupont-Bertris specifies: "all the facts which I present are based on good historical sources and, if I do not indicate the sources from which I have taken them, it is because the precaution seemed useless to me in things of public notoriety among the learned" (pp. ix–x, xii). In the course of the discussion he does mention a number of writers, however, such as Vives, Justus Lipsius, the abbé Fleury, and Naudé.

2.4.5. Even though it is aimed at the needs of the average reader, and written "in a new taste, on a curious and interesting subject" (as stated in the dedicatory letter), the *Éloges et caractères* does not seem to have enjoyed that public success its author hoped for. In the history of the genre it marks the persistence, on a populist level and in an updated form, of that classical model of the "lives" which was indeed taken up again in the second half of the century in Alexandre Savérien's *Histoire des philosophes modernes* (cf. Garin, "La storia 'critica' ", p. 271 note 35, where Dupont-Bertris' work is mentioned "among the collections of biographies of the philosophers before Savérien, which Savérien intents to oppose"). Braun defines this work as "none other than a superficial compilation". It is not wholly devoid of interesting aspects, however, such as the proto-Enlightenment themes which are found again, developed and more detailed, in Deslandes' *Histoire critique*.

2.4.6. Barbier, *Dictionnaire*, II, p. 93; Degérando, I, p. 134; Garin, "La storia 'critica' ", p. 271 note 35; Braun, p. 144 note 22; G. Piaia, *Vestigia philosophorum. Il medioevo e la storiografia filosofica* (Rimini, 1983), p. 181; Id., "San Tommaso filosofo 'italico' e 'geometrico'. Un episodio della moderna fortuna dell' Aquinate", *Medioevo. Rivista di storia della filosofia medievale*, XVIII (1992), pp. 359–378 (376–377); Azouvi, pp. 89–91.

2.5 Jean Lévesque de Burigny (1692–1785)

Histoire de la philosophie païenne or Théologie payenne

2.5.1. Born in Reims in 1692, Jean Lévesque de Burigny moved to Paris in 1713, forming a literary "triumvirate" with his two brothers, a sort of small academy of scholars devoted to extremely wide-ranging reading. The results were collected in a manuscript encyclopedia in 12 folio volumes, from which our author drew material for many of his works. Burigny then moved to Holland, where he formed a friendship with the greatest scholars and above all with Saint-Hyacinthe, who urged him to collaborate on the *Europe sçavante* (almost half of this short-lived journal [1718–1720] was written by Burigny). He returned to France and lived the life of a modest, retiring scholar, working indefatigably. With his knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, ancient and modern history, philosophy and theology, Burigny had a prodigious memory, but was often accused of lacking precision in his works. In 1756 he became a member of the *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*, taking an active part in its meetings. In 1785 the king gratified him with a pension of 2,000 *livres*.

He died in Paris in the same year. Diderot defined hims as a "very good and very learned man" whose favourite propensity was erudition.

2.5.2. Burigny wrote many works, full of his historical erudition: besides an ecclesiological and political work which falls into the Gallican tradition (*Traité de l'autorité du pape, dans lequel ses droits sont établis et réduits à leurs justes bornes et les principes de l'Église gallicane justifiés* (The Hague, 1720; Vienne 1782[2]), he published the *Histoire générale de Sicile* (The Hague, 1745), the *Histoire des révolutions de l'Empire de Constantinople, depuis la fondation de cette ville jusqu'à l'an 1453* (Paris, 1750), and a series of biographies: *Vie de Grotius, avec l'histoire de ses ouvrages et des négociations auxquelles il fut employé* (Paris, 1752); *Vie d'Erasme* (Paris, 1757; German trans., Halle, 1782); *Vie de M. Bossuet, évêque de Meaux* (Brussels, 1761); and *Vie du cardinal du Perron, archévêque de Sens et grand aumônier de France* (Paris, 1768). Of interest from the point of view of the history of philosophy are his translation *Traité de Porphyre touchant l'abstinence de la chair des animaux, avec la vie de Plotin, par ce philosophe, et une dissertation sur les génies* (Paris: de Bure, no date [1740], 8°, pp. 503) and the *Histoire de la philosophie païenne, ou Sentimens des philosophes et des peuples païens les plus célèbres sur Dieu, sur l'âme et sur les devoirs de l'homme* (The Hague: P. Gosse, 1724, 2 vols, 12°); this last work, which appeared anonymously, was reviewed and enlarged and came out in a second edition 30 years later, with its title modified: *Théologie payenne, ou Sentimens des philosophes et des peuples payens les plus célèbres, sur Dieu, sur l'âme et sur les devoirs de l'homme* (Paris: de Bure, 1754, 2 vols, lxxii–312 pp., xii–476 pp.; the edition used here). Burigny wrote a further 34 *mémoires* for the *Académie des inscriptions* and published a *Lettre* [. . .] *à M. l'abbé Mercier* [. . .] *sur les démêlés de M. de Voltaire avec M. de Saint-Hyacinthe, dans laquelle on trouvera des anecdotes littéraires et quelques lettres de MM. Voltaire et de Saint-Hyacinthe (9 janvier 1780)* (London-Paris, 1780).

Besides his collaboration on the *Europe sçavante* mentioned above (of which 12 octavo volumes were published), we should mention the attribution to Burigny of the edition of the *Recueil de pièces fugitives de différens auteurs sur des sujets intéressans* (Rotterdam, 1743) and the *Examen critique des apologistes de la religion chrétienne*. This last work, written between 1728 and 1734, initially circulated clandestinely (also under the title *Histoire critique du Christianisme*) and was only published in 1766 under the name of the famous scholar and free-thinker Nicolas Fréret (1688–1749). It maintains among other things that the advent of Christ did not render men more perfect than they had been under ancient paganism. The erudite approach of the final chapters has made scholars believe that its author was Burigny, who would in this way become an exponent of clandestine erudition inspired by deism or atheism. This attribution is problematic, however, as the *Histoire de la philosophie païenne* or *Théologie payenne* seems far from such doctrinal perspectives and we should ask ourselves rather whether the first edition of Burigny's work was not used as a source of erudite material by the author of the *Examen critique*.

2.5.3. In the *Préface historique et critique sur les principaux auteurs qui ont écrit de la théologie payenne*, placed at the beginning of the *Théologie payenne* and absent

from the first edition, the author presents the work as the fruit of material collected during his wide-ranging youthful reading and declares that he had intended to "follow what M. Leclerc had desired years ago [in the margin there is a reference to the *Bibliothèque choisie*, XXVII, p. 431], a 'methodical system of philosophical theology, showing with passages from the Ancients exactly what they believed' ". Burigny underlines the originality of his work with respect to all those that have gone before it, as it includes "dogma and morals", and also because "the author does not aim at setting out any system: his intention was merely to quote the truths and the errors taught by the ancients with the greatest impartiality, without the slightest intention of justifying them to the detriment of the good faith or healthy criticism, an error into which those who have tackled the same subject have frequently fallen" (*Théologie payenne*, I, pp. xlviii and liii). This "error" was committed by the Fathers (who, "often more pious and more zealous than great critics, do not always use in their quotations that spirit of discernment which we have become used to in these last few centuries") and, among the moderns, by Steuco, Muzio Pansa, author of *De osculo seu consensu Ethnicae et Christianae philosophiae* (1605), and Huet (in his *Alnetanae quaestiones*). Steuco in particular is rebuked for his lack of rigour: following Fabricius and Brucker, Burigny judges the *De perenni philosophia* "an undigested compilation, which frequently abuses the expressions of the ancients, because the author wants to make them orthodox at any cost" (I, pp. xi, xx, xxii, xxxiii–xxxvi). Burigny intends to characterise himself therefore for his ordered and rigourous exposition, which places at the public's disposal a useful tool of consultation and information (I, p. liii).

It is precisely this nature as an "objective" compilation that attracted the harsh criticism of the *Mémoires de Trévoux* to the first edition, contesting its very title as a "history of philosophy" (see below, para 2.5.5.). It was probably as a result of this criticism that in the second edition Burigny changed the rather ambitious title *Histoire de la philosophie païenne* to the more circumspect *Théologie payenne*. This change became even the more necessary as precisely in that period the genre of the history of philosophy had acquired a precise and systematic structure with Brucker, definitively exiling the traditional doxographical approach. Indeed Burigny himself distinguishes in the *Préface* between a general history of philosophy and the specific study of "pagan theology" compared with the principles of Christianity: "It is not that this subject [pagan theology] has not also been dealt with in the histories of philosophy, and above all in that of Mr. Brucker, whose learned history will never be read enough by those who set themelves the task of investigating in depth all that which concerns the historical aspect of philosophy; but our intention in this discourse was merely to speak of those whose principal aim was to treat the theology of the pagans" (I, p. xlvii).

2.5.4. *Théologie payenne*

2.5.4.1. The work is introduced by a *Préface historique et critique* (pp. iii–liv), a *Table des auteurs cités dans cet ouvrage, dont il y a diverses éditions* (pp. lv–lxiv: this is a bibliography of the sources, complete with typographical information) and an index of chapters. The discussion is composed of 36 chapters, numbered

progressively, added to which is a final text entitled *Réflexions sur les sentences de Sextus le Pithagorien* (II, pp. 419–424). Tome I examines the opinions on God (Chapters I–XII) and the soul (XIII–XVII); tome II tackles the theme of the "devoirs de l'homme" (XVIII–XXXII), while the last four chapters are devoted to an overall evaluation of the theology and the ethics of the pagans. The chapters are of unequal length; the longest are those devoted to the most important themes and are subdivided into paragraphs (Chapter I: *De l'existence de Dieu*, I, pp. 1–57; Chapter II: *De l'essence*, pp. 58–102; Chapter III: *De l'unité*, pp. 103–150; Chapter X: *De la providence*, pp. 186–222; Chapter XII: *De Dieu créateur*, pp. 243–294; Chapter XIV: *De l'immortalité de l'âme*, II, pp. 1–49 . . .). The discussion is followed by a long *Table des matières* (II, pp. 425–476) which also registers, besides the subjects and the classical authors, many contemporary writers. The text is furnished with footnotes (where passages are quoted in their original language) and marginal notes, reserved for simple bibliographical references.

2.5.4.2. Given its doxographical structure, the *Théologie payenne* is devoid of any scheme of periodization. The *Préface historique et critique*, which reviews the major authors writing on the theme of the *conformité* between the doctrines of the pagans and those of Christianity, nevertheless contains a rough periodization, which comes to coincide with that used for the general history of philosophy from the beginnings of Christianity to the modern age. Indeed Burigny clearly distinguishes three phases: the first is that of the Fathers of the Church from Justin to Augustine and Theodoret of Cyrrhus (2nd half of the 5th c.), who was "the last of the Fathers to compare Christian theology with the doctrines of the pagans". The second phase was determined by the definitive affirmation of Christianity: "As the cult of idols had been abolished in the empire, and since the pagans no longer enjoyed any consideration, it was believed to be no longer worth while writing against them: from that moment onwards the reading of the ancient philosophers was neglected; the Greeks only dealt with new questions which gave rise to restless spirits, which after having agitated the Church then disturbed the State". The arrival of the learned in Italy after the fall of Constantinople gave new life to interest in the ancient philosophers; these scholars in fact, "giving up all their frivolous disputes, inspired the taste for Greek *belles lettres*: people began to read Plato, Aristotle, and the other Greek philosophers in the original; they studied their systems and set themselves the aim of deriving from their works proofs in favour of religion" (I, pp. x, xiv, xvi). Agostino Steuco's *De perenni philosophia* thus began a series of studies on this theme, which have continued up until the author's day: and this is the third phase, which moves in parallel with the revival of ancient philosophy after Scholasticism.

2.5.4.3. The fundamental theory held by Burigny in his examination of the theology and ethics of the pagans is summarised in the titles of Chapters XXXIII–XXXVI: "there is no truth of natural theology which human philosophy has not known", yet "there is no sect of philosophers who has not maintained some considerable error"; analogously, on an ethical plane, "there has never been any action of moral virtue which was not practised in paganism", but at the same time "there was no perfect

man among the pagans";[9] only Revelation allows us to know "all the natural truths which it is essential for man to believe" (II, p. 342). Within this framework Burigny collects and arranges a vast amount of documentation, in which his personal intervention is reduced to a minimum: even in those cases in which he takes a position on some large problem of interpretation, Burigny does so in the voice of someone else, thus adhering to the theory of one or more particularly authoritative scholars. In the *vexata quaestio* of the atheism of the Chinese, for example, he concludes a long series of sources with the observation that "although it seems certain that the Chinese are in error, it is nevertheless true, as one learned scholar notes who certainly cannot be accused of bias in favour of the Jesuit missionaries, that the atheism of Chinese intellectuals cannot be considered atheism properly speaking [there follows a quotation from La Croze's *Entretiens sur divers sujets*]" (I, pp. 39–40). This cautious *medietas* is typical of Burigny, who rejects judgements that are too resolute, above all when faced with discordant sources and interpretations. Thus, regarding the atheism of Strato, he goes back to Brucker's theory: "It is a question debated by historians of ancient philosophy, whether Strato should be placed among the atheists of the first class, that is whether he at least nominally admitted a divinity. It cannot be denied that his principles are not as dangerous as atheism itself; there are however reasons for believing that he did not reject the existence of God" (I, p. 53). Elsewhere Burigny limits himself to presenting a plurality of interpretations without expressing an opinion, as in the case of the Japanese belief in the immortality of the soul (II, pp. 15–16). As for the theme of "Spinozism", Burigny devotes a lengthy paragraph to "those who before Spinoza taught the error that he revived", ending a long series of quotations with a comment inspired by Bayle: "we cannot marvel enough that such an extravagant idea, so full of absurd contradictions, could have introduced itself into so many people so far from each other, and so different in temperament, education, customs, and genius" (I, p. 102).

This caution in judgement corresponds to a tendency not to stress the presumed incoherencies of a writer. Following the abbé d'Olivet and Brucker, Burigny does not accept that a passage from Cicero's *De natura deorum* (I, 10), regarding the affirming of an intelligent principle by Thales and Anaxagoras, must be judged as contradictory and perhaps corrupt, as Bayle had affirmed: "if there is a way of reconciling him [= Cicero] with himself, we must take it, as there is no evidence to show that such a great man contradicted himself so openly on a single page" (I, p. 61; Burigny has an analogous attitude with respect to Plato, accused of having contradicted himself for having maintained the existence of two principles and a matter and a soul uncreated and created at the same time: cf. I, pp. 146 and 282).

[9]This last theme, dealt with in Chapter XXXVI, is based on the twelfth and last discorse of Teodoret's *Therapeutica*, as the author himself informs us in the *Préface*. The theory is demonstrated with an "examination" of the lives of some of the greatest spirits of Antiquity (Pythagoras, Aristides, Plato, Xenophon, Dion, Phocion, Timoleon, Cato the Censor and Cato Uticensis, Brutus, Seneca, Apollonius of Tyana, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius) (*Théologie payenne*, II, pp. 385–418).

One of the rare times the author intervenes is in the comparison between the arguments used by Cicero to demonstrate the immortality of the soul and that used by Arnauld and Nicole in the *Art de penser*: "This same argument [. . .] can be reduced to that of the Christian philosophers: since this is how the author of the *Art de penser* proves this truth . . .[there follows a passage from part IV, ch. 2 of this work, which Cartesianly points out that 'it is proper to the soul to think, and that it could doubt everything without doubting whether it thinks, since doubt itself is a thought', and from which the distinction between extended and thinking substance is inferred, and hence the immortality of the soul]" (II, pp. 7–9). Burigny seems therefore to tend to go beyond the traditional comparison between paganism and Christianity, as it had been established by the Fathers, and to broaden his perspective to a comparison between ancient and modern philosophy. In this regard it is significant that in setting out "what the ancients believed regarding the plurality of worlds" (in the context of the chapter on creation) he observes: "This sentiment, which several centuries ago would have made the theologians revolt, has become practically dominant among philosophers. Many famous moderns have made it their own [there follows a long list, including among others Cusanus, Bruno, Campanella, Descartes, Galileo, Kepler, Newton, Burnet, Bayle, Locke, Fontenelle] in such a way that there would be no more firmly established opinion if authority were enough to guarantee a philosophical dogma" (I, pp. 286–287; further on, on p. 291, there is a quotation from the recent *Traité des systèmes* by Condillac).

2.5.4.4. The *Théologie payenne* presents itself as a combination of the ancient method of the *placita philosophorum* with the method of erudite compilation, which developed in the course of the seventeenth century and reached its highest point with Bayle's *Dictionnaire*, whose example Burigny has before him. Indeed he constructs his work on a vast apparatus of quotations, in Greek and Latin in the notes, and summarized or translated in full in the text, and a strict comparison between sources and interpretations, which lacks however Bayle's ingenious and unprejudiced acuteness. The longest and most demanding chapters generally follow a bipartite scheme: first indicating those philosophers who recognised a certain principle, such as the existence of God or providence or the immortality of the soul, and secondly indicating those authors or peoples who denied or doubted these principles. The sources used by Burigny are numerous: besides the classical authors, we find many seventeenth-century and contemporary writers, among whom the German Reimmann (*Historia universalis atheismi*, 1725), Buddeus (*De Spinozismo ante Spinozam*), Wolf (*De Manichaeismo ante Manichaeos*), and above all Brucker, whose *Otium Vindelicum* (see below, para 2.5.5) and *Historia critica* are used. Burigny also makes use of medieval writers such as Hugh of St. Victor and John of Salisbury, and works by travellers and missionaries, among which the famous *Histoire naturelle et morale des Isles Antilles d'Amérique* (1658).

2.5.5. When it came out in its first edition under the title *Histoire de la philosophie païenne*, Burigny's work caused some ripples in learned circles and provided an opportunity for a number of comments on the "writing a history of philosophy". Heumann was quick to note it the same year, 1724, in the *Acta philosophorum*,

putting readers on their guard because, despite its appetizing title, it was certainly not a *compendium historiae philosophicae* but only a collection of quotations on the opinions of the ancient and modern pagans regarding God, the soul, and the duties of man. "Therefore", specified Heumann, who was concerned to define the "field" of the genre of the history of philosophy, "this work certainly contains a part of *Historia philosophica*, but only a part, and hence its title is much more extensive than its contents" (Heumann, III, pp. 630–631). After which, for those who desired to know the contents in detail, he referred to a review which had appeared in the same period in the *Acta eruditorum*, which considered each of the 36 chapters making up the *Histoire de la philosophie païenne*. Le Clerc's *Bibliothèque ancienne et moderne* devoted much space to the work and expressed a favourable opinion: "Nevertheless those who are able to correct the errors [numerous printing errors, above all in the Greek and Latin passages spread throughout the work] will have the convenience of possessing all these passages in two small volumes, and of seeing what the best of the pagans said on theology and morality, both whether their sentiments were contrary to the truth or whether they were not" (BAM, 1724, p. 116).

The review in the *Mémoires de Trévoux* (1725) on the other hand was highly negative: it made the same criticism as Heumann, but in a more articulated and polemical fashion: "There are works, though small in number, whose too modest titles announce but a small part of what they contain. Deceiving titles are very fashionable, but none is more so than this. It promises a history, and it is precisely, from one end to the other, nothing but a simple, very undigested compilation of passages, amassed without any historical order, without any sort of reasoning to link them and relate them to some purpose. The Author had made his collections [of quotations] on the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, the judgement of souls after death, the rewards and punishments in the afterlife, under different headings; perhaps by making these collections he wished to make a History, but without doubt found it more convenient to present his collections immediately, just as he had made them. He has done something better: we have many Histories of ancient philosophy, such as that of Diogenes Laertius, Stanley, and many other; he has extracted parts of them without taking the historical narrative that links them, and the simple extract is what he has called a 'History'. This is being a historian and a writer at little cost. This manner of quoting the sentiments of the ancient philosophers under different headings has been carried out much better by other writers, among whom the famous *père* Mourgues in his *Plan théologique*, which has so rightly been appreciated by the public because it is well-reasoned and completely systematic". The reviewer limits himelf to a critical analysis of the first two chapters of the *Histoire de la philosophie païenne*, since the others are "in an identical style"; he dwells in particular on the alleged atheism of the Chinese (the *punctum dolens* of a controversy which had not yet exhausted itself and which had placed the Jesuits under accusation) and points out that on this theme "the Author becomes eloquent, even putting to one side his style as a compiler to follow some form of reasoning and discourse; but", the reviewer insists, "he has not been able to avoid contradictions, which all those who, born simply to compile passages of opposing sense, do not fail

to incur when they decide to link them and relate them to each other without criticism. Since he is always influenced by the authority of those he quotes, one minute it is all the Chinese and the next it is only the 'men of letters' who are atheists. [. . .] But one must really be lacking in a critical faculty to recognise that certain peoples have religious cults, and then to pretend despite this that they have no idea of the divinity" (MT, 1725, pp. 1223–1227).

After touching with criticism on the fact that Burigny here openly bases himself on Bayle, the reviewer stresses the theory held by the Jesuits, namely that "all these philosophers could only pass for atheists in the centuries of polytheism: they denied the plurality of the gods, like Socrates, that is all". Thus he affirms that "it is in bad faith to pretend that most ancient philosophers were the predecessors of Spinoza" because Spinoza "limits everything to matter, while the ancient philosophers associated matter with a spirit, a soul, and an intelligence". In conclusion, "all that is good about this book is that it can save the effort of those who carry out research to produce some history, or some other more important work, since it is not a work you can read from cover to cover as it lacks both a chronological and a systematic order" (MT, 1725, pp. 1228–1229).

Burigny's work was also mentioned by Fabricius in his *Delectus argumentorum*, which came out in the same period (1725), but the greatest echo was felt in Brucker's *Otium Vindelicum* (1729), which included more than 70 pages of *Observationes criticae* on the *Histoire de la philosophie païenne*. Unlike the other reviewers, Brucker did not criticise the general approach of the work (which indeed he praised for its erudition and abundance of quotations), but he looked at it from the point of view of its historical methodology, pointing out that Burigny had often committed the mistake of confusing the doctrines of the philosophers and attributing their words with meanings that were foreign to the intentions and thought of their authors (Brucker, *Otium Vindelicum*, p. 128; in the lines following he stresses the need for a "cautious and prudent consideration" of pagan philosophy, and this idea is taken up again at the end of the *Observationes*, pp. 200–201). After these initial considerations Brucker discusses sixteen points in as many paragraphs (the atheism of Thales, the Brahmans' conception of God, the distinction between "world" and "matter" in the Stoics, the atheism of Pliny the Elder, providence in Aristotle and the Stoics, the origin of the world in the Pythagoreans, the eternity of the world and the origin of the soul in Plato, etc.), adding to his analysis a systematic review of modern interpreters. The *Histoire de la philosophie païenne* was also known in Italy: Paolo Mattia Doria make it the subject of several *Considerazioni* in his *Difesa della metafisica degli antichi filosofi*. He criticised the "superficial knowledge" proper to philologists and men of learning, who are devoid of "geometrical logic" and hence unable to penetrate "the intimate nature and the essence of the metaphysical and moral properties of the world", in the same way as they were understood among the pagans by the "metaphysical and methodical philosophers", and hence he also tasked the anonymous author with having attributed these latter with errors and lacunae regarding the concept of happiness, knowledge of the truth, and moral perfection, which instead are proper to the "Sensist" philosophers (Doria, *Difesa*, I, pp. 219–248; on Doria's

historiographical positions see below, Chapter 4, Introduction). Burigny's work was also use by Genovesi in his *Theologia*, whilst Tennemann indicated it in his systematic bibliography, in the section "History of the different methods, systems, and philosophical schools" (Tennemann, p. 21).

Moving on now to an overall evaluation of Burigny's work, it must be noted that from various points of view it holds a unique place: indeed for its structure it can be placed outside the genre of the history of philosophy, but precisely for this reason it comes to find itself at the centre of a methodological discussion which is of interest to us not so much in order to grasp the limits of the work itself as to verify "in the field" the degree of autonomy reached by the "genre" in the French area. If Heumann's observations seem obvious in the light of his theoretical premises, particularly indicative on the other hand are the criticisms expressed in the *Mémoires de Trévoux* as, leaving aside the polemic, they denote an awareness of what is specific to the historiography of philosophy with respect to simple erudition. This seems to be so much the more worthy of note since the French panorama, as we have already noted, has so few real "histories of philosophy", and because Burigny's work itself, in its contents and structure, was certainly not far from the tastes and interests of the learned public in France. From another point of view, the *Histoire de la philosophie païenne* is singular because its re-edition (a good 30 years later and after the appearance of the *Historia critica*) can now be placed "after Brucker", in a position analogous to that of Deslandes. But while Deslandes, in the second edition of his *Histoire critique*, reacted strongly to Brucker's criticisms, Burigny took the observations made in the *Otium Vindelicum* into account and frequently made use of Brucker's *monumentum* as an authority. We thus see a curious fusion between the *Histoire de la philosophie païenne* (which because of its doxographical approach appears decidedly old-fashioned with respect to the developments in the genre of the history of philosophy) and the *Théologie payenne*, which Burigny presents as a work detached from the history of philosophy, but which uses the results of Brucker's historiographical work.

2.5.6. On Burigny's life and works, and, in particular, the controversial attribution of the *Examen critique*: BUAM, VI, pp. 318–319; A. Monod, *De Pascal à Chateaubriand* (Paris, 1916; repr. Geneva, 1970), p. 440; Wade, *The Clandestine Organisation*, pp. 195–204; Vernière, *Spinoza et la pensé française*, pp. 334, 352, 354, 378–379. . .; Spink, pp. 298–299 and 318; F. Diaz, *Politica e filosofia nel Settecento francese* (Turin, 1962), p. 302 note; Rétat, *Le Dictionnaire de Bayle*, p. 236 note (which also quotes Diderot's opinion); A. Niderst, "L''Examen critique des apologistes de la religion chrétienne', les frères Lévesque et leur groupe", in *Le matérialisme du XVIIIe siècle et la littérature clandestine*, pp. 45–66; B.E. Schwarzbach, "Sur l'attribution de deux textes clandestins à J. Lévesque de Burigny", *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*, LXXXV (1985), pp. 54–59; *"De l'Examen de la religion" attribuable à Jean Lévesque de Burigny*, ed. S. Landucci (Paris-Oxford, 1996), pp. 7–25; M. Benítez, *La face cachée des Lumières. Recherches sur les manuscrits philosophiques clandestins de l'Âge classique* (Paris-Oxford, 1996), pp. 150–154; A. McKenna, "Recherches sur la philosophie

clandestine à l'Âge classique: bilan et perspectives", in *La philosophie clandestine à l'Âge classique*, eds. A. McKenna and A. Mothu (Paris-Oxford, 1997), pp. 9–11.

On his fortune: AE, 1724, pp. 415–419; BAM, XXII (1724), pp. 115–168; XXIII (1725), pp. 365–386; Heumann, III, pp. 630–631; MT, XLIII (1725), pp. 1223–1229; J.A. Fabricius, *Delectus argumentorum, et Syllabus scriptorum, qui veritatem religionis christianae adversus atheos, epicureos [. . .] lucubrationibus suis asseruerunt* (Hamburg, 1725), p. 303; Brucker, VI, p. 929; J. Brucker, *Otium Vindelicum, sive meletematum historico-philosophicorum triga* (Augsburg, 1729), pp. 127–202; P.M. Doria, *Difesa della metafisica degli antichi filosofi* (Naples, 1732), pp. 219–248; Tennemann, p. 20; Degérando, I, p. 135; on Genovesi cf. P. Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica di A. Genovesi* (Naples, 1972), pp. 110–111 and 304; Varani, *Pensiero ' alato' e modernità*, pp. 339–345.

On the criticism: Braun, p. 144 (which observes that "Burigny's point of view is however more dogmatic than historical; he wants to show that no pagan was a complete and perfect man"); J. Macary, *Masque et lumières au XVIIIe siècle* (The Hague, 1975), p. 107 note (where the *Théologie payenne* is quoted as an example of the "philosophical paganism of the 18th century"); R. Ragghianti, *La tentazione del presente. Victor Cousin tra filosofie della storia e teorie della memoria* (Naples, 1997), p. 54 note; Bianchi, "Note su Bayle storico della filosofia nel secolo dei Lumi", pp. 75–82.

2.6 Gilbert-Charles Le Gendre de Saint-Aubin (1688–1746)

Traité de l'opinion

2.6.1. Gilbert-Charles Le Gendre, marquis de Saint-Aubin-sur-Loire was born in Paris in 1688. Destined for the magistrature, he studied jurisprudence and then acted as a counsellor to Parlement, *maître des requêtes*, and the Kin g's referendary (1714), resigning after several years to devote himself entirely to study. He died in Paris in 1746.

2.6.2. Saint-Aubin wrote a number of historical works: *Des antiquités de la maison de France et des maisons mérovingienne et carlienne et de la diversité des opinions sur les maisons d'Autriche, de Lorraine, de Savoye, Palatine et plusieurs autres maisons souveraines* (Paris, 1739): this work was much criticised in the reviews of the time and the author replied to them with two *Réponses*; *Des antiquités de la nation et de la monarchie française* (Paris, 1741): this work was also subjected to objections and criticisms; a dissertation on the work and the authenticity of Roricon (author of a chronicle which ends with the death of Clovis), which appeared in *Mercure*, October 1741. Saint-Aubin had previously published a work of a polyhistorical nature, which had enjoyed reasonable editorial success: the *Traité de l'opinion, ou Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de l'esprit humain* (Paris: C. Osmont, 1733), 6 vols, 12° (Paris: Briasson, 1733–1735, 6 vols, 12°; Venise: chez François Pitteri, dans la Mercerie, à la Fortune Triomphante, 1735, 2 vols, 4°, xvi–702 pp.; 440 pp.; Paris, 1741, 7 vols, 12°; Paris, 1758, 9 vols, 12°). The

work is divided into 6 books: I: *Des belles lettres et de l'histoire*; II: *Histoire de la philosophie*; III: *Histoire de la métaphysique*; IV: *Histoire des sciences qui ont des objets corporels*; V: *De la politique*; VI: *De la morale*. In the Venice edition used here, the text is prefaced by an *Avis du libraire* (pp. iii–vi), a *Préface* by the author (pp. vii–xii), and a table of chapters; both volumes include an index of the authors quoted and an index of subjects. Here we will examine the second book, which outlines the historical development of philosophy.

2.6.3. In the *Préface*, Saint-Aubin sets out the reasons behind his work and the link between the two formulations of the title, at first sight very different from one another: "It is a treatise on the opinions which have reigned in the profane sciences, a new way of educating the mind through experience and its own history, a subject for which no writer has yet conceived a plan. My first intention had been to write separate treatises one after another, one on the uncertainty of history and chronology, another on politics, and others on physics and astronomy, and thus to divide all the subjects contained in the whole work". Once he had decided against this plan, Saint-Aubin thought he would provide some "memoirs to be used for a history of the human spirit. This title", he specifies, "has a necessary link with a treatise on opinion, since the profane sciences gathered together and the history of the human spirit tend naturally to convince us that opinion dominates all research of pure curiosity. I insist more on facts than on reflections, and treat my theme much more as a historian than a dogmatic. I indicate in general the sources of the errors rendered public by fame, but I do not carry out particular dissertations on every example, which would have led me too far, and in which I could have passed off only very uncertain conjectures. My main concern has been to strip the abstract sciences of their obscurity, to render them intelligible to people who have never applied themselves to them, and to reveal those shady mysteries in whose shadow we have often seen the most deceptive and vain arts seduce weak and credulous spirits " (*Traité*, I, pp. vii–viii).

These statements, which contain a flavour of the Enlightenment, would seem to be inspired by the example of Bayle. In reality Saint-Aubin's work can be placed on an entirely different speculative horizon, revealing precise concerns of an apologetic religious nature. This is what transpires right from Chapter I of Book I (*Du dessein de l'ouvrage*), which functions as a "second preface" to the work and clarifies its theoretical implications: "The immense variety of objects which nature offers to the eye unanimously leads men to the knowledge of a supreme being; all the regulations of the legislators, which seem to have no link with one another, tend and concur to the good of society; even the differences in men's opinions can be linked back to the same end and serve us as a reason for walking with all the discernment we are capable of along the path of truth [...] It is by getting used to reflecting on the empire, or rather the tyranny, of opinion that we can better undeceive ourselves of many errors. As much as Pyrrhonism is dangerous and indeed senseless, so is a moderate diffidence, which suspends our judgements, prudent and advantageous. Its use is to examine without prejudice the opposite opinions, and it sets itself the aim of giving every opinion the degree of credibility which it deserves. This is the first use towards which the present work tends". In the lines which follow,

Saint-Aubin stresses the insurmountable difficulties facing scientific knowledge: "Man's mind is not made for science. It knows neither spirits nor bodies; it is equally ignorant of the properties of the spiritual and the material substances. All its force has to succumb to the smallest atom of matter. Infinite divisibility, whether we admit it with the Peripatetics and the Cartesians or we reject it with the Epicureans and Gassendians, involves difficulties and contradictions which it is impossible to imagine and reconcile [a note here refers to the article *Zénon*, *remarques* E-F in Bayle's *Dictionnaire*]. All the mind's penetrative capacity is unable to clarify what happens within us, and how the bodily objects act on the soul. If we add to the experience of our personal weakness a study that teaches us how limited is the knowledge of the most famous authors, we will find the true reason for taming the presumption of the mind. And this is the second use I have in mind. This disposition is the happiest of all for receiving the lights of faith. In fact, since the human spirit cannot understand the things that are hidden in the simplest way in the order of nature, would it not be an open sin against reason to refuse to believe the effects of God's omnipotence (which is in itself incomprehensible), since our spirit cannot understand them? And would it not be perhaps the most unreasonable of all demands to want to submit to an examination by reason that which is above reason and infinitely surpasses its weakness?" (I, pp. 1–2).

After mentioning the third aim of his work ("to inspire for the occult sciences all the scorn they deserve"), Saint-Aubin goes back to the theme of the fallacious nature of human knowledge, declaring that "the plan and the title of this work have been taken from these words by Pascal: 'I would readily like to see the Italian book of which I know only the title, *Della opinione regina del mondo*. I subscribe to it without knowing it, except for the bad things it might contain, if there should be any' " (I, p. 3; cf. B. Pascal, *Pensées*, fr. 82 Brunschvicg). The paragraph that follows contains a series of *sententiae* from the ancient philosophers (to whom the author has added Cardano) on the limits of human knowledge. This procedure recalls that used by Huet in his *Traité philosophique de la faiblesse de l'esprit humain*, although Saint-Aubin – as we will see below – clearly distances himself from this work and from scepticism in general. After stressing the obstacles we meet on the road to truth, basing himself on Plato's myth of the cave, he follows Polybius in stating that "the truth knows how to progress through illusions and to show its strength and its light, after piercing the shadows which attempts have been made to hide it with". Saint-Aubin goes on to clarify the approach adopted in his work and to claim its originality with respect to the analogous works by G. F. Pico and Cornelius Agrippa: "A complete history of the human opinion or spirit would include all the profane sciences and arts and, given that most opinions are born of the passions, this history would at the same time embrace that of the human heart. I am very far from thinking that I would be able to treat a subject so vast in size. This is merely a series of *mémoires* to serve the history of the human mind". As for Pico's *Examen veritatis* and Agrippa's *De incertitudine*, "they only speak to the learned and briefly indicate the examples of uncertainty and the contradictions that are found in the sciences. They presuppose a reader educated enough to judge the different opinions, which these two authors only speak of superficially. For my part I have followed a different

path: I go into great detail in the sciences, in such a way as to make the reader unversed in them able to see the empire and the dominion that opinion holds in them. I explain their principles and quote the opinions of the most esteemed authors, as far as is necessary, to give a just and complete idea of them, and often in the same terms that the authors have used. I hope in this way to have adapted myself to every kind of reader: to the learned, who will find with pleasure in a single work opinions that are spread over a great number of volumes; and those who, never having applied themselves to the subjects I treat, can form an idea of them with this single work" (I, pp. 5–6).

Within the general framework, philosophy holds a significant position "since it embraces the greatest number of profane sciences" (I, p. ix). At the beginning of Book II Saint-Aubin lists the "advantages" that philosophy, understood in the broadest sense, has brought to the development of human society, then to point out that "this same philosophy has been a source of errors and contradictions. [. . .] Philosophy can be compared to man himself, who is a composite of light and shade, of greatness and misery. Nothing so absurd can be affirmed, says Cicero, as is not confirmed by the opinion of some philosopher". Condemned as impious by the pagans because it opposed their religion, "full of extravagencies and crimes", after the advent of Christianity "philosophy is of all the sciences that which reconciles itself best with our holy religion, and nothing is more capable of exalting man to the sovereign being than the contemplation of nature" (I, pp. 102–103). As for Saint-Aubin's speculative orientation, it can be identified with eclecticism: in presenting this sect he declares that "eclectic philosophy is the best of all since every sect reached some part of the truth and there is none which has not affirmed some errors". Indeed, "if eclectic philosophy is the best of all, it is also the most difficult; it requires a much greater range of knowledge and correct discernment to choose what is best in every sect" (I, pp. 178–180).

2.6.4. *Histoire de la philosophie (Traité de l'opinion, Book II)*

2.6.4.1. In the Venetian edition of the *Traité*, the part devoted to the *Histoire de la philosophie* takes up pages 102–216 and is divided into 16 chapters, the last two of which deal with the history of astronomy and medicine. The chapters are subdivided into paragraphs, with a summary at the beginning of each; the title and numbering of the paragraphs are quoted in the margin of the text. The notes (with bibliographical references and at times quotations) are at the bottom of the page.

2.6.4.2. Saint-Aubin clearly distinguishes between three periods: pre-Greek philosophy (Chapter I), Greek philosophy (Chapters II–XIII), and "modern" philosophy (Chapter XIV). Greek philosophy is divided into sects, which derive from two principal branches according to the distinction made by Diogenes Laertius. Under the heading "modern philosophy" we find all those thinkers who lived after the birth of Christ, from Plutarch and Epictetus up until the philosophers of the seventeenth century. In Chapter XIV, however, the span of "modern" philosophy is somewhat restricted: after touching on the "re-establishment of letters" following the fall of Constantinople to the Turks, Saint-Aubin specifies that "we will use this period [. . .]

as a fixed term, suitable for separating the ancients from the moderns, qualifying as ancients all those who came before this epoch, and moderns all those who appeared after" (*Traité*, I, p. 181).

2.6.4.3. For Saint-Aubin philosophy is as old as the world: "Adam had an infused philosophy, and thanks to the names he gave the animals and plants he showed the knowledge he had of their properties. It seems that Plato learnt from holy Scripture how the first man excelled in the science of nature when he says that the primitive names express the virtues of things and were inspired by God himself. [...] Original sin very soon spread darkness into the human spirit: the patriarchs, preserving a healthy tradition, transmitted to a people chosen by God several principles of this philosophy which emanated from the heavens, and discarding all the fables of antiquity we can persuade ourselves with great likelihood that philosophy began with the patriarchs" (*Traité*, I, p. 104). The neglect into which the "profane study of philosophy" fell after Solomon, with the Hebrews devoted entirely to divine things, gave various ancient peoples a pretext for attributing the invention of philosophy to themselves. "In reality", notes Saint-Aubin, "what the Egyptians told us about themselves seems so fabulous and their pretension was wrapped in such impenetrable obscurity that we cannot allow ourselves to be convinced by them", while there is nothing which is more "frivolous" than what has been handed down to us about Zoroaster. As for the Greeks, they derived their knowledge from the peoples of the East and it was their "vanity", "their natural disposition, and the example of other peoples" which led them to pass off "their fables on the origin of philosophy" (pp. 105, 108, 114).

Saint-Aubin attaches particular importance to the figure of Socrates, noting that his death "is a great example of constancy and generosity", but he clearly refuses to consider him as a saint or a martyr, as Erasmus had done (p. 120). He has a rather negative opinion of Plato, whose thought is defined as unsystematic, contradictory, and obscure. Saint-Aubin touches on the development of Platonism up until the Renaissance, criticising the "excesses" reached by some Platonists, in particular Ficinus, in comparing the doctrine of their master to Christianity. Referring to one of his last writings on the subject, Saint-Aubin observes that "in his *Vie de Platon* [added to his translation of the Platonic dialogues, published in Paris in 1699, 1701^2] André Dacier attributes this sublime philosopher with some knowledge of the incarnation and the passion of our Saviour, but not all his [Plato's] readers admire him as Dacier does. They find him obscure, confused, full of fables and visions. Only chance has produced the terms which Dacier tries to apply to Christian truths. It is not surprising that such a prolix philosopher often used the term 'discourse' (*logos*), 'verb', or 'reasoning', without intending any mystery by it" (pp. 128–129).

Saint-Aubin's speculative position, which recognises the limits of human knowledge but at the same time rejects scepticism, resurfaces in his comment on the doctrines of Arcesilaus: "To give authority to his untenable propositions, he associates them with Heraclitus, Parmenides, Socrates, and Plato, but they were inspired in him by Pyrrho. [...] However much modern followers of Arcesilaus and Pyrrho [in a note: "*Oeuvres* de La Mothe Le Vayer. *Traité de la foiblesse de l'esprit humain.*

Essais de Montaigne"] strive to demonstrate that of all the dispositions of the mind, the best for religion is to suspend our assent to all the natural truths; that a mind empty of all opinion is more humble and more suited to receiving the lights of faith; and that an understanding free of all prejudice is more docile, [. . .] it is clear that excessive doubts and this general uncertainty, which does not admit any natural truth, block all paths for supernatural truths to reach our intellect, since all truths, even those revealed, are based on the certainty of a number of facts and the evidence of a number of reasonings" (pp. 122–123; cf. also pp. 159–160, where the author maintains that the second Academy of Arcesilaus and the philosophy of Pyrrho fundamentally constituted a single sect, and declares that "it is senseless to sincerely doubt the primitive truths, not to be convinced of the principles for which we feel an inner conviction, and to deny those notions whose natural light shines at the spirit. Pascal (*Pensées*, Chapter 21) denies with reason that one can be a Pyrrhonian in good faith. Descartes maintains that we cannot doubt we exist").

Aristotle is the philosopher to whom Saint-Aubin grants the greatest space. After some information on Aristotle's life, he notes that in the past this philosopher had been the object of excessive praise, given that he "did not retract any of his errors, the principal of which are offensive to the divinity" (the denial of foresight and providence in our sublunary world, the mortality of the soul, the eternity of the world . . .). Saint-Aubin is particularly interested in Aristotelian logic, which is contrasted with the new Cartesian logic: after touching on the internal division of Aristotle's logic and its degeneration with the Scholastics, he notes that "the method of dividing and defining is good, but at times the subtlety of the divisions makes us lose sight of the object of our reasoning, the definitions are often useless, obscure, and full of confusion. [. . .] Most errors do not consist of drawing the wrong consequences, but of making false judgements, from which the false consequences derive. It is this point that ancient logic made little effort to remedy. The great principle of Descartes' logic is the analysis he uses to decompose, so to speak, the objects of reasoning, in such a way as to know them better. [. . .] Since men are much more easily deceived by false principles than by false consequences, true logic [there is a reference in the margin to the *Logique de Port-Royal*] consists of showing us the sources of our errors and uprooting the prejudices introduced either by education or by the passions" (pp. 136–137). Saint-Aubin also sets out the "revolutions" of Aristotelian philosophy, as de Launoy had done, and notes among other things that the nominalists "have been viewed as the precursors of the Cartesians". In his discussion of the Italic school those philosophers whom Diogenes Laertius had defined as "sporadic" are grouped under the Eleatic sect (Chapter XI), which is declared to be "very similar to the eclectic sect". As for Epicurus, Saint-Aubin refers to Gassendi, who "has entirely cancelled out all the ancient impressions unfavourable to the name Epicurean" (pp. 170 and 178).

In Chapter XIV Saint-Aubin presents a synthesis of the development of philosophy from the epoch of Caligula and Nero to the end of the seventeenth century. The rise of Scholasticism is linked to the conquest of Constantinople by the French, just as the "re-establishment of letters" was the work of the learned refugees who came to Italy after the fall of the Byzantine empire: "we learn from history therefore

that the sciences came from Greece to the West three times". Among the "philosophers who revived letters in the West" he mentions Pomponazzi, Nifo, Marsilius Ficinus, Poliziano, Giovanni and Gianfrancesco Pico, Rudolph Agricola, Erasmus, Fracastoro, and Cardano, and provides essential biographical information on them. Saint-Aubin is clearly aware of the difference between the sixteenth and the seventeenth century from a philosophical point of view: "the sixteenth century, which it seems to me can be entitled the most learned of all the centuries, drew ancient philosophy out from under the shades which immerged it. The last century went further: it criticised this ancient philosophy and produced one that can pass as new, even though most of its discoveries have their source in the writings of the ancients: Descartes' famous hypothesis on vortices, for example, was known to Leucippus. Plato, and Epicurus" (p. 183).

After pointing out the "contradiction" incurred by Descartes when he placed at the centre of vortices rarefied matter, which has greater movement and centrifugal force, Saint-Aubin briefly mentions the most important philosophers of the seventeenth century: Galileo, Gassendi, Descartes, Bacon, Pascal, Hobbes, and Boyle. "We owe modern philosophy its due", he specifies, "that a methodical spirit and clarity reign over it much more than in ancient philosophy". The chapter ends with a brief word on the opposition to modern philosophy in the universities and with a significant reference to Newtonian physics, which was about to supplant the very doctrines of Descartes: "a new physics, which expresses itself in algebraic calculations, has recently begun to impose itself. Its principles are entirely opposed to those of Descartes. It uses attraction and vacuum as the basis for its hypotheses; Cartesian philosophy will soon become antiquated and the Newtonians will look at Descartes today as the Cartesians viewed Aristotle last century. Many physicists resist the re-establishment of the force of attraction, and while some praise this system as the perfection of a modern physics which removes all difficulties, others consider attraction itself to be a term which does not explain anything and which makes philosophy sink back into those occult qualities which Cartesianism seemed to have banned never to return" (p. 185). The continual succession of new scientific hypotheses therefore serves as a confirmation of the "dominion of opinion", and indeed in Book IV, physics is defined as an "essai de conjectures" (p. 445). This very succession however also favours a more detached historical consciousness, as the polemical contrasting of ancient and modern philosophy is replaced by a sense of the temporary nature of scientific hypotheses, which makes the definitive triumph of one philosophical system over the others impossible. Even the "progress" of one age with respect to the one that came before it does seem to be exempt from possible "returns", as in the case of the "occult qualities" introduced by Newton.

2.6.4.4. Saint-Aubin does not conceive of the history of philosophy as a subject to be treated in a single work. Going back to the schemes used in polyhistory or the multi-disciplinary approach used by Rapin in his *Réflexions* (which along with the *Comparaisons* are quoted more than once), he limits his *Histoire de la philosophie* to the traditional history of the sects and the philosophers ("I write the history of the different sects in the second book": *Traité*, I, p. ix), while the history of the doctrinal

contents is divided between the *Histoire de la métaphysique* and the *Histoire des sciences qui ont des objets corporels*, in which a review of the opinions of the ancient and modern philosophers is added to the theoretical discussion. At the beginning of Book III (which is divided by subject: God, demons, the world, the soul, beasts, magic, the cabbala, oracles, the Sybils …) Saint-Aubin specifically states that his plan "is not to give a treatise of metaphysics here, but to retrace the history of the mind (*retracer à l'esprit sa propre histoire*) in the opinions concerning this science" (I, p. 217). Historical discussions of this type, which refer back to the tradition of the *placita*, are also found in Book VI (*De la morale*), at the beginning of which is a review of the opinions of the ancient philosophers regarding the "supreme good". We find a typical example of this division of the history of philosophy into a *historia sectarum et personarum* and a *historia doctrinarum* (to use Brucker's terminology) in the case of Plato: in his *Histoire de la philosophie*, Saint-Aubin only presents a biographical profile and a brief history of Platonism, besides a general opinion. As for Plato's doctrines, he limits himself to quoting Laertius' statement that Plato was influenced by Heraclitus in physics, Pythagoras in metaphysics, and by Socrates in ethics. The great themes of Plato's thought are set out and discussed instead in the *Histoire de la métaphysique*: the theory of ideas, the existence of spiritual substances, the myth of the winged charriot, the immortality of the soul, the doctrine of the demiurge, and other themes appear in the treatment of God, demons, the soul, and the world (I, pp. 121–122, 239, 246, 270–271, 292–293, 306).

In his structuring of the text Saint-Aubin devotes much space to quotations, mindful perhaps of the example of Bayle's *Dictionnaire*. The range of sources is very wide and includes, besides the classics, many authors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; of the modern historians of philosophy, Stanley, Rapin, and Ménage, are used, as well as de Launoy's *De varia Aristotelis fortuna*. Bayle is quoted in Books I, III, and IV, but not in Book II which contains the *Histoire de la philosophie*; despite this silence, Saint-Aubin clearly shows he has used Bayle as a source, as his treatment of Aristotle, for example, is mostly based on the article *Aristote* from the *Dictionnaire*.

2.6.5. As soon as it came out, Saint-Aubin's work was positively reviewed in the *Mercure de France* of May 1733: "Two principal qualities of a work are its treatment of the subject exhaustively from the point of view of knowledge and its giving us more to think about than what is merely expressed in it. The author of the *Traité de l'opinion* has succeeded in both cases" (*Mercure de France*, 1733, p. 961). More measured and articulated was the opinion expressed in the supplements to the *Nova acta eruditorum*, where the *Traité* was reviewed at length: "It is certainly not unpleasant to read the book, and the soul is delighted no little by the variety of its subjects. Again we point out however that those who believe they will find a well-ordered history of the opinions and the *placita* of every epoch and all the sciences deceive themselves. […] But those who believe that this work is favourable to the sceptics deceive themselves even more, as the author repeatedly declares himself far from this position" (NAE, Suppl., IV, 1742, p. 109). Even more critical was the judgement of the materialist Naigeon in the history of philosophy written for the

Encyclopédie méthodique in which he observed of the *Traité de l'opinion* that "there is nothing philosophical about it except the title, and nothing useful except the quotations" (Naigeon, *Philosophie ancienne et moderne*, I, *Discours préliminaire*, p. ix). The BUAM on the other hand stressed the contrast between the Saint-Aubin's theoretical intent and the erudite apparatus which weighed down the work, which attempted to be at the same time a series of *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de l'esprit humain*: "This work, erudite as it is curious, would have been more successful without the digressions which the author overburdens it with, which make us lose sight of his declared aim" (BUAM, XXIII, p. 559).

The most interesting fact concerning the fortune of the *Traité* is constituted by its presence in the programme of studies of the young Rousseau, as set out in the *Verger des Charmettes* (1737), during his stay with Mme de Warens. Masson has noted that Saint-Aubin's work, which was both "a repertory of science and a prevention against science", fully satisfied the dual requirement of Rousseau in that period: "to acquire knowledge, but to re-establish its rightful value by means of the certainties of religion and the practice of virtue". Masson points out in particular that at the beginning of his book Saint-Aubin quotes a maxim that was to be adopted by Rousseau: "Convince yourselves that the humble knowledge of ourselves is preferable to all the depths of human science" (Masson, *Le religion de J. J. Rousseau*, I, pp. 90–91; cf. *Traité*, I, p. 9 where this maxim is taken from the *Imitation of Christ*). For his part Rétat has observed that in book III of the *Traité de l'opinion* Rousseau could have found "an orthodox confutation of all Bayle's audacities", from his theory on atheism to the proof of general consensus, from the theme of providence to that of the souls of beasts: these arguments must have aroused the interest of the young Rousseau, who in that period was certainly not inclined towards Bayle's *esprit critique* (Rétat, *Le Dictionnaire de Bayle*, p. 372).

For an overall evaluation of the *Traité de l'opinion* we must bear in mind that neither the work's structure nor its inspiration are original, despite the author's declarations. Its originality consists if anything in having (as the title itself indicates) superimposed a "critical" and doctrinal aim onto a genre based on polyhistory, which normally limited itself to a historical and erudite plane. But in this case too the way had already been opened up by Bayle, who had made the historical dictionary a formidable tool for doctrinal criticism. It is not by chance that Bayle's name has appeared more than once in these last few pages, since he represents for Saint-Aubin both an adversary to combat in the name of religious orthodoxy and a model to imitate – albeit at due distance – as well as a source to exploit. In the place of the dictionary Saint-Aubin adopts the genre of polyhistory, brought up to date in the form of the "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de l'esprit humain", but the fundamental theme of the limited nature of human knowledge and the criticism of errors and "opinions" is supplied by Bayle (significant here is the quotation of the article *Zénon* in the preface), even though it is a Bayle viewed through Pascal and adapted to the framework of religious apology. The history of human knowledge, that of philosophy in particular, is seen by Saint-Aubin therefore as a history of the "opinions" and errors which authors have incurred from time to time: "A modern poet", he writes at the beginning of the *Traité*, echoing Bayle, "has called Libraries

"proud archives of man's stupidity". The mind will see here on the other hand the very humble archives of a great number of his aberrations" (*Traité*, I, p. 3). As for placing Saint-Aubin's *Histoire de la philosophie* in the context of the historiography of the early eighteenth century, we must note that the fragmentation of the history of philosophy into distinct structures (a *Histoire de la philosophie* in a strict sense, a *Histoire de la métaphysique*, and a *Histoire des sciences*) should not be interpreted as the pure and simple survival of the polyhistorical framework. This framework in fact reveals itself to be functional to Saint-Aubin's plan of writing a *histoire de l'esprit humain*, the need for which was particularly felt in French culture of the period, if precisely in those years (1735) the periodical of the abbé Prévost, *Le Pour et le Contre*, could observe that "a history which has been long awaited is that of the human mind" (Geissler, *Boureau-Deslandes*, p. 41). From this point of view, Saint-Aubin's work is an antecedent of Deslandes' *Histoire critique*, where the history of philosophy is strictly linked to the *histoire de l'esprit humain*.

2.6.6. On Saint-Aubin's life, works, and speculative orientation: BUAM, XXIII, pp. 559–560; P.-M. Masson, *La religion de J.-J. Rousseu*, I: *La formation religieuse de Rousseau* (Paris, 1916[2]), pp. 90–91, 105, 107, 149, 228; Rétat, *Le Dictionnaire de Bayle*, p. 372 note; Momigliano, *The Controversy*, p. 87.

On his fortune: JS, C-CI (1733), pp. 113–134 and 191–213; *Mercure de France*, 1733, p. 961; *Le Pour et le Contre*, I (1733), pp. 210–212 and 229–230; NAE Suppl., IV (1742), pp. 103–110; J.-A. Naigeon, *Philosophie ancienne et moderne*, Paris, 1791–1794, I, *Discous préliminaire*, p. ix.

On the criticism: R Geissler, *Boureau-Deslandes. Ein Materialist der Frühaufklärung* (Berlin, 1967), p. 41; Braun, p. 378; Piaia, "Storia della filosofia e 'histoire de l'esprit humain' ", pp. 197–202; Id., *Vestigia philosophorum*, pp. 156–157 and 181–182; Bianchi, "Note su Bayle storico della filosofia nel secolo dei Lumi", pp. 82–86.

Chapter 3
A "Critical" History of Philosophy and the Early Enlightenment: André-François Boureau-Deslandes

Gregorio Piaia

Introduction

Our investigation into the histories of philosophy produced in the French-speaking area has taken us well into the eighteenth century (Le Gendre's *Traité* appeared in 1733 and was re-edited up to 1758, and Burigny's *Histoire de la philosophie païenne* was republished in 1754), but these works are situated in the margins of the intellectual movement of the early Enlightenment. The first example of a history of philosophy which reflects typical enlightenment concerns comes with André-François Boureau-Deslandes's *Histoire critique de la philosophie*. Deslandes himself was a "minor" figure with respect to the "great men" of his age, and he remained unknown, or virtually so, until his rediscovery through the work of Gueroult, Carr, Geissler, Garin, Macary, Del Torre, and, more recently Franck Salaün and Elisabetta Mastrogiacomo. In reality, however, Deslandes put forward and developed cultural and philosophical themes at the beginning of the eighteenth century which were taken up again by the "great men" of the Enlightenment: "He knew Newton and favoured English philosophy and economics much earlier than Voltaire: his *Nouveau voyage d'Angleterre* came out in 1713; before Voltaire he praised Colbert and the century of Louis XIV (his *Essay sur la marine et sur le commerce* appeared in 1743); he preceded Diderot in his use of the philosophical dialogue of materialistic tendency, and Condillac in his development of the theme of the *Pigmalion, ou la Statue animée*, which dates to 1741. Finally, he was the author of the first history of philosophy written in French: the first three volumes of his *Histoire critique de la philosophie*, which were to be plagiarized by some of the Encyclopaedists, were published in 1737" (Macary, *Masque et Lumières*, p. ix). It is in fact with Deslandes that the genre of the history of philosophy developed both from the limited and subordinate form of the abridgement and from the traditional formulae of a biographical, doxographical, or polyhistorical nature still in vogue in the early eighteenth century to gain fully independent status. But he does

G. Piaia (✉)
Università di Padova, Dipartimento di Filosofia, Piazza Capitaniato 3, 35139 Padova, Italy
e-mail: gregorio.piaia@unipd.it

G. Piaia, G. Santinello (eds.), *Models of the History of Philosophy*, International Archives of the History of Ideas, Archives internationales d'histoire des idées,
DOI 10.1007/978-90-481-9507-7_3, © Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2011

not merely make up for the "delay" of French historiography with respect to the Germans; indeed Deslandes's work constitutes a decisive step in the development of the "genre", transforming the by-now consolidated *historia philosophica* into a "critical" history of philosophy: he can take credit for having applied the need for a "critical" approach (which Bayle had called for in historical investigation in general) to the field of the history of philosophy, anticipating, here too, an expression which was to be consecrated in Brucker's *Historia critica*. Brucker's *monumentum* is without doubt of a different calibre from that of the *Histoire critique de la philosophie*, so much so that the latter was soon put to one side and forgotten, while the work of the German scholar is traditionally considered the "first" real manifestation of modern philosophical historiography. Nevertheless, although Deslandes's four little pocket-sized volumes may appear insignificant placed beside Brucker's massive tomes, the *Histoire critique de la philosophie* is still worthy of consideration in its own right, both for the intrinsic value of the work itself, and for its connection with the cultural and ideological interests, the doubts and problems, which fermented European society in the early eighteenth century.

3.1.1. Deslandes's biography contains elements absent from the usual *curriculum vitae* of the scholars and *hommes de lettres* considered in the previous two chapters. He was born in 1689 in Bandel (India) into an enterprising family which had played an important role in the French colonial expansion launched by minister Colbert. His father, André, his uncle Jacques (who perished in a shipwreck in 1681), and his maternal grandfather, François Martin, were in fact employed by the *Compagnie des Indes Orientales*; André Deslandes and François Martin founded the colonies of Pondichéry and Chandernagor respectively and undertook important commercial missions to Siam which were to inspire André-François' *Histoire de M. Constance, premier ministre du Roi de Siam* (1756). In 1701, André Deslandes returned to France to enable his children to receive a suitable education; in 1703 Louis XIV granted him a title of nobility for merit gained in his service, and appointed him commissioner of the Navy, Officer for Justice, Police, and Finance in Santo Domingo in the West Indies, and Director General for America of the Negro slave trade. André died in Santo Domingo several years later, in 1707, while the young André-François remained in all probability in France. It is not known whether he completed his studies, "but the personal relations he had with Malebranche lead us to believe that he was, if not educated by the Oratorians, at least influenced by their spirit" (Macary, *Masque et Lumières*, p. 11). Indeed in a long essay, written partly in verse and partly in prose and dedicated to his own study (*Mon cabinet*, 1745), Deslandes quotes the Occasionalist philosopher among his favourite writers (along with Descartes, Newton, Locke, Hobbes, Clarke, Gassendi, and Halley), whose portraits hang on the walls, and he addresses them in the following eulogistic lines: "The taste of sincere virtue/I drew from your bosom./Sublime character!/Malebranche, I owe you everything./Driven back by your hand,/prejudice hides,/And the despised error/deludes us no more./Your propitious friendship/tried to keep me in those places,/where peace, justice,/offered you a foretaste of heaven./But my distracted soul/failed to appreciate the value of

happiness,/Which your enlightened hand/tried to pour into my heart". The author himself points out in a note added to these lines that "Malebranche had tried with all his might to attract me into the Oratory. But family considerations, together with an indispensable journey which I had to make abroad, prevented me from following this path" (*Histoire critique de la philosophie*, Amsterdam, 1756, IV, pp. 192–193; he pays further homage to the Oratorian philosopher in the composition *In mortem Nicol. Mallebranchii*, inserted into the 1752 edition of the collection *Poëtae rusticantis literatum otium*).

On the 17th February, 1712, the young André-François was admitted to the Paris *Académie des Sciences* as "apprentice geometer" and in the same year he travelled to England in the entourage of the Duke d'Aumont, a *habitué* of libertine and radical circles, who had been charged with negotiating an end to the Spanish war of succession. During his stay in London, which lasted 10 months, Deslandes had the opportunity of making many observations (collected in *Nouveau voyage d'Angleterre*) and he also made the acquaintance of Newton, whose theories of vacuum and universal gravitation he embraced. In 1716 he entered the civilian administration of the Navy and was employed for approximately 26 years in the ports of Brest and Rochefort, attaining the rank of general commissioner. In this capacity he worked to improve the conditions of the French fleet, at that time in a state of decline, and aimed to establish a close scientific and technical collaboration between the Naval Ministry, under Maurepas, and the *Académie des Sciences*. Far from the cafés and the salons of Paris, he devoted his free time to study and to literary activity. His plans for reform, an expression of his commitment as a *citoyen et philosophe* (as Voltaire defined him, although Deslandes himself also uses these two terms together) were however rendered vain by the prohibitions and condemnations which beset the works he wrote in the years 1737–1745, and by vaguely-defined persecutions ("Twice hypocrisy/In her flat cap and black cloak, / Has through jealousy made me / Feel her sad power": *Mon cabinet*, p. 198). These delusions may explain his request to be removed from the list of veterans of the *Académie des Sciences* (after 1738) and his own resignation from the Navy around 1742, before the age of retirement. Having moved to Paris, Deslandes wrote his *Essay sur la marine et sur le commerce* in support of the plans of the minister Maurepas, taking as his model Colbert's former policy and the commercial strategy of nearby England. The entry into the court by the Marquise de Pompadour (1745), which signalled the coming to power of those financiers and speculators whom Deslandes had attacked in his work, however, removed any possibility of modernization. His final years were devoted to study. Deslandes was on terms with Diderot, whom he visited when the latter was imprisoned in Vincennes (1749). His name figures in the *Discours préliminaire* of the *Encyclopédie* (1751) among those who, "without having provided entire articles, have made important contributions to the *Encyclopédie*", to be precise, in the technical and scientific field; here d'Alembert does not mention the *Histoire critique de la philosophie*, which nevertheless appears to have been used (without any bibliographical reference) in several articles of the *Encyclopédie* (cf. below, para 3.1.5). Deslandes was on terms with another *philosophe*, Maupertuis, and also indirectly with Voltaire, who from Potsdam asked him, via M. de La

Condamine, for "several details which could serve to characterize the good times of the government of Louis XIV" (Macary, *Masque et Lumières*, p. 41). There is conflicting evidence regarding his death (11th April, 1757): according to Fréron, he died in the bosom of the Catholic Church, officially renouncing his most anti-religious writings; according to the evidence collected by Malesherbes (and judged by Geissler and Macary to be the more truthful), he died a *philosophe* and an *esprit fort*, remaining faithful to the last to the ideas that he had divulged in his writings.

The intellectual personality of Deslandes, viewed in its entirety, marks the transition from the libertine mentality of the seventeenth century, which can be perceived in some of his poetic writings, to a mentality which already bears the characteristics of the Enlightenment. In him, notes Macary, "a new type of philosopher" takes shape: "Son of a bourgeois ennobled thanks to commerce and royal administration, he dreams up, better to serve this king and his nation, reforms which he and his friends – the *philosophes* – were to have the task to promoting. He is a very good example of a certain bourgeoisie in the ascendant at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century; these functionaries and technicians are convinced that reforms will be carried out by their own hands, with their own creativity. Deslandes is not a man of letters who 'bows' to economic and political realities; he is a man of action and efficiency. From this interchange between the world and the written word a complex and coherent vision of the world comes into being. Corresponding to this vision is a conception of the means and the end of writing which makes use of a mask in order better to educate the 'magistrates' without dazzling the people or exciting the fanatics" (Macary, *Masque et Lumières*, p. 46; on Deslandes's use of the "mask", see in particular, pp. 169–197).

3.1.2 Deslandes's literary activity was multiform, ranging from poetry to scientific memoirs and the history of philosophy. The complete list of his writings includes 18 books, over 27 memoirs and letters on various topics, and a series of unpublished letters to the Abbé Bignon. The group of "libertine and philosophical essays" (to use Macary's expression) includes first of all the *Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant*, Deslandes's first published work (Amsterdam, 1712; successive editions, enlarged by several poetic compositions extolling the pleasure of love and of the table: Rochefort, 1714; Amsterdam, 1732; Rochefort, 1755; Amsterdam, 1758 and 1776; modern ed. by F. Salaün, Paris, 2000; English trans.: London, 1713 and 1745; German trans.: Frankfurt-Leipzig, 1747, 1780, 1797). The work, in the words of the author himself, is a "happy mixture of erudition and criticism [. . .] equally removed from the dryness of the Compilers and the affectation of Pedantry", in which Deslandes openly links himself to Montaigne and the sceptical and libertine tradition of the writers of the seventeenth century, as well as the pessimism of La Rochefoucauld and La Bruyère: a pessimism, which, far from becoming a form of moral rigorism, "leads to the nonchalant and playful wisdom which is recommended to us by the attentive disciples of Nature" (Macary, *Masque et Lumières*, p. 95).

Of a slightly later date is his *L'Art de ne point s'ennuyer* (Amsterdam, 1715; Paris, 1715; Amsterdam, 1750; English trans.: London, 1724; German trans.: Leipzig, 1772), a truly philosophical essay inspired by an Epicurean, refined ethic, in which themes and writers – ancient and modern – reappear which were already present in the *Réflexions*. Alongside these two works can be placed the *Nouveau voyage d'Angleterre*, written in 1713 but published anonymously in Villefranche in 1717. In it, the author goes beyond curious observation, devoting space to his reflections and attempting to capture the "particular character" of the English; he stresses their "great love of freedom" and recognizes that "it is they who have contributed most to the re-establishment of the sciences: physics, geometry, algebra, and medicine are indebted to them for much of the richness by which they have been enriched in recent years. I dare say furthermore that there is no realm in Europe in which the art of reasoning [. . .] is more cultivated than in England" (*Nouveau voyage*, 1750 ed., p. 228).

After these youthful works (which also include his collection of Latin poems, *Poëtae rusticantis literatum otium*, London, 1713), for the next 20 years Deslandes published only works of a scientific nature. These are very circumscribed, precise *observations*, mostly on nautical subjects, sent to the *Académie des Sciences* and the *Mémoires de Trévoux*: *Observation sur un poumon divisé en cinq lobes*, 1718; *Sur la différence des sangliers d'Afrique et de ceux d'Europe*, 1719; *Sur l'organisation des vers qui rongent le navires*, 1720; *Sur le flux et le reflux de la mer*, 1729, etc. Some of these topics were taken up again in the *Recueil de différents traités de Physique et d'Histoire naturelles* [sic] *propre à perfectionner ces deux sciences* (Paris, 1736, 1748, 1750, 1753). This latter work is introduced by an interesting *Discours sur la manière la plus avantageuse de faire des expériences*, in which the author clearly sides with Newtonian experimentalism against the *esprit de système*, which was dominant among the neo-Cartesians of the *Académie des Sciences*, and exalts the infinite possibilities for the development of science. After referring briefly to the principal milestones on the road to scientific progress up to the turn of the eighteenth century, Deslandes advises the natural scientist "to cultivate Experimental Philosophy, without worrying about any system, to collect facts which are well-verified and certain, to carry out a large number of experiments, and to vary them in all possible ways; finally, to remain convinced that there will always be more things to discover than will ever be discovered by the most discerning of geniuses. Half a century ago, it was thought that Nature had been investigated sufficiently when one had read Rohault or Régis's *Physics*, with the addition of Descartes's *Principles of Philosophy*. Today these vast Collections which have issued from the various Academies of Europe can be considered as mere preliminary studies. Far from congratulating themselves that, in studying them, the final frontier of physics will be attained, the wisest will judge that this is without end, that it is inexhaustible" (*Recueil*, 1748 ed., p. 269).

These references to the historical development of philosophy and science precede by just one year Deslandes's major work, the *Histoire critique de la philoso-phie, où l'on traite de son origine, de ses progrez et des diverses révolutions qui lui*

sont arrivées jusqu'à notre tems, par Mr. D***, which was published anonymously in Amsterdam by F. Changuion in 1737 (3 vols, 12°, pp. xli–vii–372; viii–447; viii–344). In a letter sent that same year to the journal of the Abbé Desfontaines, Deslandes was quick to repudiate this edition: "This work has been attributed to me, on the basis of I do not know what foundation. But I will not recognize it, in the state in which it is in today, as a product of my own pen. In Holland several audacious remarks have been added to it and some even more insolent reflections which I, along with all enlightened and judicious people, condemn" (*Observations sur les écrits modernes*, XI, 1737, p. 165). With this letter Deslandes protested his orthodoxy in such a way as to obtain from the Minister for Justice "tacit permission" to sell the work printed abroad in Paris. Permission was denied however and the work was banned. This may have been the reason why Deslandes refrained for a number of years from publishing volume IV of the *Histoire critique*, which was devoted to modern philosophy and which – on the basis of what he had declared in the *Préface* – was ready for printing.[1] This volume did not appear until 1756, almost 20 years later, in a new edition of the work edited in Amsterdam by the same printer Changuion, and this time it obtained "tacit permission" to be sold in France (the cultural and political climate had by this time changed in favour of the *philosophes*, to such an extent that in this period Condillac was in charge of censorship). In the meantime, the three-volumed *Histoire critique* had also been re-edited in 1742, "à Londres, chez Jean Nourse", but it is probable that this was a counterfeit edition, since behind "Jean Nourse" there operated a clandestine editor whose activity is attested from 1740 to 1774 (cf. G. Brunet, *Imprimeurs imaginaires et libraires supposés*, Paris, 1866; facs. repr. New York, no date, pp. 154–157). The *Histoire critique* was not translated into English, unlike Deslandes's other more successful works; a German translation, limited to the first volume, however, appeared in Leipzig in 1770: *Der Herrn Deslandes Kritische Geschichte der Philosophie, worinnen von dem Ursprunge derselben, von ihrem Fortgange, und von den verschiedenen Revolutionen, die sich darinnen bis auf unsere Zeiten ereignet haben, gehandelt wird* (Leipzig: im Verlag der Heinsiussischen Buchhandlung, 1770. xl–344 pp.).

After 1737 Deslandes's literary activity became particularly intense. In 1741 he published in London the essay *De la certitude des connoissances humaines* and the short story *Pigmalion, ou la Statue animée* (successive eds.: London, 1742 [together with the essay *L'optique des moeurs, opposée à l'optique des couleurs*] and 1744; Berlin, 1743 and 1753; German trans.: Hamburg, 1748; modern ed. with German trans. in Geissler, *Boureau-Deslandes*, pp. 117–146; modern ed. with Italian trans.: A.-F. Deslandes, *Pigmalion, ou la Statue animée. L'optique des moeurs, opposée à l'optique des couleurs*, ed. E. Pesci, Milan, 2008). This latter was condemned to the flames by the *Parlement* of Dijon because of its openly materialistic inspiration.

[1] *Histoire critique*, 1756 ed., I, pp. xl–xli: "Si le Public daigne m'encourager par son approbation, on n'attendra pas long-tems celle [= l'histoire] du quatrième [Age] qui déjà est toute disposée à reçevoir le jour. J'y paroîtrai presque inventeur, ici je suis moins original, j'emprunte des autres beaucoup de choses".

It tells the story of a beautiful Statue, sculpted by the Cypriot Pigmalion, which gradually comes to life, acquires feeling and then thought, developing a soul whose life "differs little from that of the body" (ed. Geissler, p. 124).

The taste for historical research, not as an end in itself but orientated towards practical application, which inspires the *Histoire critique de la philosophie*, can again be found in the *Essay sur la marine et sur le commerce* (no place, 1743; Amsterdam, 1743; English trans.: London, 1743) and the *Lettre sur le luxe* (Francfort, 1745; London, 1746). In the *Lettre* (with which Deslandes enters a long-standing debate) historical references accompany his condemnation of the luxury of customs (*luxe des moeurs*) – to be distinguished from the luxury of genius (*luxe de génie*) – and his proposal to reorganize French society on the basis of personal merit and services rendered to the nation. Deslandes attacks in particular the *nouveaux riches*, tax collectors, and bankers, who foster the growth of the *luxe des moeurs*. This theme was to be dealt with again later in the allegorical and satirical tale *La Fortune. Histoire critique* (written in 1749 but published, no place, in 1751) and in the satirical and philosophical novel *Histoire de la princesse de Montferrat* (London, 1749). The list of works concludes with the *Essai sur la marine des anciens, et particulièrement sur leurs vaisseaux de guerre* (Paris, 1748 and 1768), the *Lettre à M. . . Trésorier de France* (no place, 1748), the short *Traité sur les différens degrés de la certitude morale, par rapport aux connoissances humaines* (Paris, 1750), the *Lettre critique sur l'histoire navale d'Angleterre* (no place, 1752) and the *Histoire de M. Constance, premier ministre du Roi de Siam* (Amsterdam, 1756), already mentioned above, which contradicts the version of the Jesuit missionaries in which the minister died as a Christian martyr.

3.1.3. Deslandes was the first French writer to carry out a complete theoretical discussion of the object, the ends, and the methods of the history of philosophy. In the lengthy *Préface* to the *Histoire critique* he sets out the general plan of the work and then dwells on several particularly important themes to which he devotes three *Eclaircissements*; this discussion is then significantly developed in the *Avertissement* added to the fourth volume of the *Histoire critique*. Deslandes is aware of the problem of defining "philosophy" as an object of historiographical research, but his solution takes the form of a "non-definition", since he refuses to maintain a single restricted and static definition of his object throughout the course of his historiographical research. "Philosophy", the *Préface* begins, "is the Science with the most noble meaning, and at the same time the widest. Everything is virtually subject to her wise laws in the Republic of Letters: everything depends on her Command, even that which seems to depend least", and this declaration is backed up by a passage from *Ep.* LIII by Seneca, a writer who appears more than once in the *Préface*. Deslandes historicizes the concept of philosophy and connects it to other manifestations of human genius: "Among the Ancients, she [= Philosophy] embraced their Theology, their Religion, the origins of their History, some of their Jurisprudence, and their Morality. Among the Moderns she includes all the Sciences, exact and natural, which have as their object not the flattery of the imagination with pleasing expressions, but the nourishment of the intellect (*esprit*) and its fortification

by means of solid knowledge. I will add that in all ages Philosophy has risen to the highest forms of speculation she has been allowed to attain; she has neglected nothing that could ennoble her. But these forms of speculation have not always been the same, and in effect there is no reason why they should have been; because the first truths, once found, served as fixed points for finding new ones; because Revelation has rendered constant and invariable many Dogmas, over which previously there was hesitation. Do not expect, therefore, to find Philosophy defined here: any definition would be beneath the general ideas which she inspires. I will be satisfied by dividing her History into several Ages, and by indicating successively in each Age what Sciences were included under her name, what efforts of reason those Great Men made who worthily embraced her, what obstacles they met on their way, what abilities they drew on, and with what courage they armed themselves, to overcome these obstacles" (*Histoire critique*, 1756 ed., I, pp. i–ii; the theme of the "greatest extension" of philosophy is taken up again at the beginning of volume IV, p. 3).

After touching briefly on the "delight" and "instruction" offered by the history of philosophy thus understood, "which embraces such a great number of riches, of riches so diverse" (from knowledge of the "Sovereign Arbiter of Nature" to the study of the celestial bodies and the individual objects which surround us), Deslandes concludes in these terms: "Here, roughly speaking, is the idea that I have formed of Philosophy. Her History, viewed from a certain angle, can pass for the very History of the Human mind (*l'Histoire même de l'Esprit humain*) or at least for the History in which the Human mind seems to have ascended to the highest possible viewpoint" (I, pp. iii–iv). This tendency to enlarge the history of philosophy to a more general *histoire de l'esprit humain* is confirmed in the *Avertissement* to volume IV, in which the author announces his intention of completing the work in a further two volumes devoted to the *histoire de l'esprit et du coeur humain*. In these the following themes were to have been dealt with: "1°. The detailed account of the virtues and vices which triumphed in each century, of the cruelty, the injustices committed, the names of the just and beneficent kings, whose list is so short, and the names of the tyrants and the other evil princes, in such a way as to inspire horror in their regard. 2°. The progress of human knowledge, the efforts of reason made by the great philosophers and legislators, the institution of the principal religions of every country, and the changes that have taken place in them, both by chance and by premeditated design; finally, the various tastes which have succeeded one another, in customs, in sentiments, and in relation to the normal commerce of life. This History, if I am not mistaken, will contain something new and singular" (IV, pp. iii–iv). The importance of these statements for a proper understanding of the genesis of the modern "history of civilization" has been pointed out by Garin: "In other words", he thus comments on Deslandes's plan, "the 'Histoire critique de la philosophie' was to have led to a general history of civilization", and he goes on in a note: "*Histoire de l'esprit*, *histoire du coeur*, *histoire de la civilisation* – and so on: the progression towards a history of civilization takes place not only much earlier than Hegel and the theme of *Zeitgeist* and *Kulturgeschichte* of Hegelian origin, but it may also have very different and distant roots" (Garin, "La storia 'critica' ", p. 251; cf. also Del Torre, p. 115; Geissler, *Boureau-Deslandes*, pp. 40–44).

Death prevented Deslandes from carrying out his plan, the "novelty" of which he stressed to the same extent as did Le Gendre de Saint-Aubin with his *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de l'esprit humain* (cf. above, Chapter 2, para 2.6). It is therefore impossible to compare the structure of this *histoire de l'esprit et du coeur humain* with Le Gendre's work and the polyhistoric tradition, or to search for similarities between Deslandes's planned history of taste, customs, and sensibilities and the *Histoire critique du goût* by the Abbé François Cartaud de la Vilate, for example, which came out in Paris in 1736. It would have been particularly interesting to have been able to examine the way in which Deslandes intended to deal with "the progress of human knowledge" and the "efforts of reason made by the great philosophers", without creating some sort of duplicate of his history of philosophy. Perhaps the author did not have such a clear idea of his plan, since, although in the passage quoted above he refers to a *histoire de l'esprit et du coeur humain* as an addition and a complement to the *Histoire critique de la philosophie*, in the lines immediately following he identifies the *histoire de l'esprit humain* with his *Histoire critique de la philosophie* (in keeping with what he had written in the *Préface*) and he associates this, as a necessary integration, with the *histoire du coeur humain*: "And since in writing the critical History of philosophy my intention has been to write the history of the human genius, considered in its most favourable points, [so] it seems to me that, in order to give greater relief to this History, the history of the human heart must be linked and united intimately with it. If we wish to reach a true understanding of man, we must first dissect him, so to speak, and consider first of all his mind (*esprit*), and then his heart" (*Histoire critique*, 1756 ed., IV, p. iv). At the origin of this oscillation is Deslandes's uncertainty as to whether to identify the "history of philosophy" with he "history of the human mind" *tout court*, or to admit a less exclusive relationship, where the history of philosophy is made to correspond, "at least", with the "history in which the human mind seems to have ascended the highest point possible", that is, with the highest manifestations of the *esprit humain*, whose "field" is nevertheless not completely covered by that of philosophy as understood by Deslandes – however wide it may be.

Consideration of philosophy as a historical concept is accompanied by a recognition of the contribution of various individual characters and different historical epochs to the development of the discipline: "The divergent characteristics, somewhat inclined to contradiction, which in other sciences disturb one another almost despite themselves [. . .] in philosophy constitute a complete and happy assortment. Some begin to prepare the way for a certain onslaught of ideas, for an impetus of reason: they till the virgin soil. Others, by means of subtle analysis, of wise and ingenious consideration, cast doubt on what has been said and bring it to the point of extreme precision". This distinction is applied from a historical point of view to the relationship between the ancients and the moderns: "From this it may be concluded that the Moderns are in general more prone to success in the study of natural things, that they philosophize with greater clarity and success. But they still owe a debt to their ancestors, not so much for those new and useful things which they have found, as for the very art and the hope of finding them. The first steps that are taken in the thorny progress of the sciences are always the most difficult, and it is

precisely because they are taken very slowly that extreme gratitude is due to those who came before us, who boldly dared to uncover the secrets, the enigmas of nature". These considerations view the historical course of philosophy as one inspired by a balanced faith in progress, which justifies and values the study of the past as a history of the attempts and the errors made by man in order to discover truth: "In effect, so many systems which have failed and which still fail today; so many hasty hypotheses, which have been unable to clarify new phenomena; so much reasoning belied by experience; so many experiments which were believed to be true, but which were found to be false after more mature examination; in a word, so many doubts and uncertainties which one fine day we attempt to dispel, make me believe that in the end we will be able to arrive at something precise and regular, or at least we will know with certainty that it is not possible to arrive there in certain subjects: it is virtually the same thing to the human mind, which is so extensive in one sense and so limited in the other" (I, pp. iv–vi).

Moving on to the *Eclaircissements*, the first contains a panegyric of philosophy against its detractors, who fall into two groups. The first group accuses it of being "useless, or at least totally problematic" or of being concerned with observations which are too minute and insignificant, carrying out research which is "indifferent to society". Deslandes replies that philosophy sheds light on all the other sciences and in particular is able to investigate the two principal characteristics of the Supreme Being: "immensity, through the extension of celestial space, and infinite intelligence, through the mechanics of animals". He asserts, however, that "none but the philosopher has eyes, or at least knows how to use them in the most advantageous way", and that "the more he works, the more he opens up new paths, and at the same time the more he is steeped in solid, rare, instructive knowledge". The author's sensibility, which as it transpires from his reference to the Supreme Being and his glorification of the *philosophe* is by now characteristic of the Enlightenment, is evident in his successive contrasting of the metaphysics of the schools with a philosophy understood as wisdom applied to everyday behaviour and civil life: "On the other hand, philosophy is not a doctrine of pure speculation, and only for the use in the Lyceum or the Academy. Little by little she influences customs, and consequently the entire conduct of our lives: she enters the study (*cabinet*) of Great Men, makes them more adept at business, inspires them with the noble love of the public good, she becomes the basis and the foundation itself of their sentiments; she keeps company moreover with pleasures, and certainly does not blush on this account, because she knows how to re-acquire her natural severity when necessary and at the precise moment necessary. What would be the point of Wisdom if she were not a companion, a faithful friend, and one always at hand?" (I, pp. viii–x; cf. also IV, p. ii, where the author again stresses that "the Philosopher is the only citizen, and the citizen is the only one who loves and secures the public good"). The other group of philosophy's adversaries "accuses it malignantly of leading to whims and eccentricities, to a type of life that strays too far from the common rules". This is a reproach traditionally aimed at philosophers, to which the author responds by distinguishing between philosophy and the shortcomings of those who profess it; for this reason "philosophy must not be reproached for the sophisms of Chrysippus, the

ridiculous excesses of Diogenes, the subtleties of Euclid, or the impious effrontery of Diagoras" (I, pp. xi–xii).

The second *Eclaircissement* is particularly important as it is devoted to the objectives and methods of the history of philosophy and constitutes the central core of the *Préface,* viewed as an outline of a theory of philosophical historiography (*Eclaircissement III*, devoted to the *querelle des anciens et des modernes* and to periodization, will be analysed in the following paragraphs). Deslandes begins by pointing out that an "infinite number of authors" have written the history of philosophy and he cites apropos the eighteenth-century re-edition of Jonsius. "Given this", he notes, "I will without doubt be asked to what gain or use can be the present which I make to the public today. To recall what others have said, [even though] it might have to be said again with greater order and elegance, is a vain, imprudent affectation, and I confess furthermore, hardly worthy of a man of honour". The author is therefore aware that the genre of the history of philosophy is by now saturated, and he tries to create a space for himself within it by criticizing his predecessors. His is a balanced criticism, since he recognizes that "their shortcomings and their oversights, inevitable consequences of first attempts, have educated me almost as much as my own personal reflections" (I, pp. xvi–xvii). Deslandes had already taken a stand against the traditional way of writing the history of philosophy in the general section of the *Préface*, distinguishing between simple compilations, though well-deserving, and the far more "instructive" work of the internal reconstruction and explanation of the thought of the ancient philosophers.[2] Now he takes up this theme again and deals with it in greater detail, denouncing three methodological defects characteristic of the history of philosophy: the prevalence of doxographical erudition at the expense of speculative sensibility, the excess of biographical anecdotism, and the attempt to maintain a harmony between ancient and modern philosophy. The most interesting "defect" is the first, since Deslandes's awareness of it marks the transition from erudition concerning the history of philosophy to a "critical" history of philosophy: "Among writers of Philosophical History, some have worked without choice, *without discernment*, more like compilers who collect than censors who judge. *They have referred the thoughts of others, and they have not cared enough to think themselves*. [. . .] He who is in no way a Philosopher, neither through taste nor inclination, can know all that the Philosophers have proposed; and this sterile,

[2] *Histoire critique*, 1756 ed., I, pp. vi–vii: "C'est déjà l'ouvrage d'une main sçavante, que de recueillir séparément les divers Systêmes des Philosophes Anciens et Modernes, d'entrer dans le détail de leurs actions, de faire des analyses exactes de leurs ouvrages, de ramasser leurs sentences, leurs apophthegmes, et même leurs bon-mots. Mais c'est-là précisément ce que l'Histoire de la Philosophie contient de moins instructif. Le principal et l'essentiel, à mon avis, c'est de remonter à la source des principales pensées des hommes, d'examiner leur variété infinie, et en même-tems le rapport imperceptible, les liaisons délicates qu'elles ont entr'elles; c'est de faire voire comment ces pensées ont pris naissance les unes après les autres, et souvent les unes des autres; c'est de rappeller les opinions des Philosophes anciens, et de montrer qu'ils ne pouvoient rien dire que ce qu'ils ont dit effectivement; c'est en un mot de suivre et de démêler ce prodigieux amas de véritez et d'erreurs qui sont parvenus jusqu'à nous, et qui jettent encore les plus éclairez dans une sorte de Pyrrhonisme, ou dumoins dans l'embarras de choisir".

fruitless knowledge acquired through simple reading oppresses the spirit more than it enlightens it, and leads it to a form of discouragement. Polybius wished for there to be none but men of State, consummate experts (*rompus*) perfected by long experience of business, who had the right to write history. In effect, to what avail can it be to display to the eyes of the public the dogmas of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, and Epicurus, *if one cannot at the same time discover what is praiseworthy or reprehensible in these doctrines?* If we cannot penetrate *the reasons which gave rise to them*, the *illusions* which they can create in the mind, and the *surprises* which they give to the heart? If, finally, we do draw from this comparison all the *usefulness* that it can provide?" (I, pp. xvii–xviii; italics ours).

For Deslandes the true history of philosophy must therefore be the work of the philosopher and not the erudite compiler, and indeed in the preceding pages he attributes himself, albeit modestly, with the title of "philosopher", stressing more the mental habit and the function rather than the content ("I will add furthermore that if it is necessary in order to write the History of Philosophy well to be something of a Philosopher, then I will be so bold as almost to appropriate that title for myself; not supposing in myself any superior knowledge, which I naïvely admit I lack, but for the desire I have always had to make the best use possible both of the faculty of my mind and of the feelings of my heart: all this following the strict limits which have been prescribed for me": I, p. viii). Deslandes's criticism of a purely erudite approach to the history of philosophy is formulated in an analogous way to that of Heumann; more than the *Acta philosophorum* written in German and hardly accessible to a Frenchman, his position seems however to take its bearings from the "anti-history of philosophy" attitude expressed by Malebranche. The phrase "ils ont rapporté les pensées d'autres, et n'ont point assez songé à penser eux-mêmes" seems to reiterate Malebranche's analogous statement: "ce sont plutôt des historiens que de véritables philosophes, des hommes qui ne pensent point mais qui peuvent raconter les pensées des autres" (see above, Chapter 1, Introduction). The hypothesis of a direct link between these two opinions is by no means unlikely in the light of the personal relations which existed between Malebranche and the young Deslandes, who even in his old age considered the Oratorian philosopher to be one of his intellectual masters. If this were so, the *Histoire critique de la philosophie* would come to embrace, and precisely from a theoretical point of view, the radical criticism of a philosopher whom Braun defined as "the Cartesian most hostile to history" (Braun, p. 59).

This fact, which is at first sight disconcerting, is in reality an indication of the by-now complete transformation of erudite seventeenth-century historiography (which had aroused the opposition or at least the indifference of the Cartesians and of someone like Malebranche) into a "critical" history of philosophy, which does not limit itself to "amassing" biographical anecdotes and *sententiae*, but which aims to capture "the imperceptible relationship" between the ideas of the philosophers, the "delicate links which exist between them", the genesis of a theory and its effects, to then evaluate critically what is acceptable and what is not, turning the history of philosophy into "useful" and not "sterile and fruitless" knowledge. This transformation of the genre of the history of philosophy is accompanied

however by a transformation of the concept of "philosophy" itself; and it is here that Malebranche would no longer have found himself in agreement with his confrère *manqué*. Indeed, Deslandes's stress on analysis and theoretical evaluation, as an alternative to pure erudition, is no longer situated on the same metaphysical horizon as that of Descartes and Malebranche, but is orientated towards an essentially practical and social philosophical perspective, in which the "reason" of the great metaphysical systems has given way to the "reasonableness" of the Enlightenment. A significant confirmation of the methodological position put forward by Deslandes in the *Préface* is to be found at the end of the *Avertissement* to volume IV, where again the contrast is stressed between a history of philosophy which is, so to speak, "external", of a biographical and doxographical nature, and an "internal" history, which aims at discovering "the genius and the character of the ancient philosophers" according to a model which had already emerged in Dupont-Bertris' *Éloges et caractères* (see above, Chapter 2, para 2.4).[3]

As for the second "defect", this consists of an excessive tendency on the part of several historians of philosophy "to follow the events in the lives of the individual Philosophers, and to gather everything that happened to them, even in those naïve moments in which one is clad in nothing but one's *déshabillé*. I condemn such an excessive zeal", the author goes on, "and I recognise that not every aspect of the great men is equally instructive. And to limit ourselves here to the History of Philosophy, I will say that one should dwell less on the details of their actions than on that *je ne sais quoi* which characterises their way of thinking, of expressing themselves, of grasping the smallest objects" (*Histoire critique*, 1756 ed., I, p. xix). Finally, Deslandes sharply criticises those who attempt by any means (and this is the third "defect") "to reconcile old and new philosophy, to adapt one to the other with ingenious solutions", thus distorting the various thinkers. In fact "by dint of seeking links between different philosophers, one runs the risk of altering them all, if not in the general outline, then at least in detail, and one ends up by distorting their sentiments almost without meaning to; one suppresses on the one hand what is embarrassing, and on the other that which seems susceptible to a multiplicity of meanings is willingly extended. In such a way, one does nothing but contrive an apparent and short-lived reconciliation". As an example, the author quotes the three "most distinguished" books of those that he has been able to examine: the *Physicae conciliatricis tentamina* by Johann Christoph Sturm (1686), the *De consensu veteris et novae Philosophiae* by Du Hamel (see above, Chapter 1, para 2.2), and Leibniz's *De Aristotile recentioribus reconciliabili*. "These three authors", he observes with Baylian overtones, "in order to reach their aim use I

[3] *Histoire critique*, IV, p. vii: touching on the favourable reviews of the "principaux journalistes" to the first edition of the *Histoire critique*, the author notes that "ce qui m'a plus touché, c'est qu'ils m'ont rendu la justice que je souhaitois qu'ils me rendissent, c'est d'avoir préféré à une érudition fastueuse, et qui pour l'ordinaire coûte peu à acquérir [the allusion is aimed at Brucker], ce choix et cette attention qui servent à éclairer les hommes; d'avoir plus songé à faire connoître le génie et le caractère des anciens Philosophes, qu'à rapporter leurs sentences, leurs bons mots, les titres de leurs livres et l'Olympiade où ils ont vécu".

do not know how many embellishments and purposely distort all the characters they deal with. Yet they should have borne well in mind the fact that the character of the ancient and modern philosophers is such that what differs between them changes and destroys forever what they may have in common. In general all Conciliators are unsuccessful, indeed they are to be pitied, because in desiring to place two contrary positions in agreement, often they do nothing more than attract them to a middle position which is neither one nor the other, and they confirm each of the antagonists in his own position. We have seen this happen in all the ages and in every type of subject", and here Deslandes recalls the unfortunate vicissitudes of the *Interim* of Charles V of Hapsburg (I, pp. xx–xxii). After continuing his criticism of concordism with some reflections inspired by the continual changing of human opinions, Deslandes concludes this *Eclaircissement* with three methodological directives which he opposes to the defects analysed above: "Here are some of the rocks on which the principal writers of the History of Philosophy have run aground, and which I have tried to avoid: 1°. Not to let any System pass without expressing my own judgement on it, not, to tell the truth, on the knowledge that has been acquired in this century, but on the knowledge which could have been acquired in the century in which the system was put forward; 2°. To suppress all the facts and all the details that are not necessary for an understanding of the basis of its character; 3°. To leave both ancient and new philosophy within the limits which are proper to them, and above all not to mix them up with each other in any way" (I, pp. xxii–xxiv).

3.1.4. *Histoire critique de la philosophie*

3.1.4.1. In its definitive edition (1756), the work is divided into 10 books and 57 chapters numbered progressively, each in turn subdivided into paragraphs which, unlike the chapters, bear a title. As well as in the *Table des chapitres* placed at the beginning of each volume, the summary index of paragraphs is repeated at the beginning of each chapter. The 10 books are entitled as follows: I**:** *On the state of philosophy before the Greeks*; II: *On fabulous philosophy, and the seven Sages*; III: *On the two principal Sects of Philosophy which flourished in Greece, and their Founders, Thales and Pythagoras*; IV: *On Socrates and his Followers, particularly those who established new Sects of Philosophy*; V: *On the Eleatic sect, Heraclitus, Pyrrho, Democritus, Epicurus, etc.*; VI: *On the Philosophers who flourished in Alexandria, under the Ptolemeys*; VII: *On the Philosophers who flourished in Rome*; VIII: *On the Philosophers who flourished from the reign of Trajan to the decline of the Roman Empire, and from its decline up to the fall of the Eastern Empire*; IX: *On new Systems of Philosophy invented by the Arabs, and by the Scholastics*; X: *On the Renaissance of Letters in Italy, and successively in the other Kingdoms of Europe*. These books are divided into the four volumes of the work thus: Vol. I, Books I–II; Vol. II, Books III–VI; Vol. III, Books VII–IX; Vol. IV, Book X.

Volume I is preceded by a *Préface* with its own page numbers (pp. i–xli); the 1737 edition also included an *Epître à M. Henri Bicker, bourgemaître régent de la ville d'Amsterdam*, signed by the editor François Changuion, which was omitted in the successive editions of 1742 and 1756. Volume IV is introduced by an

Avertissement (pp. i–vii, not numbered) and by a short collection of texts and reflections, *De quelques pensées et de quelques axiomes propres à découvrir le fond de la Philosophie des Anciens*, divided into 8 paragraphs (pp. viii–xiv). It contains moreover a *Discours où l'on examine ce que les anciens Philosophes pensoient de la Divinité* (pp. 1–50), which does not figure in the *Table des chapitres*. Two poetic compositions were also published in this volume: *Mon cabinet* (pp. 187–199), quoted above, and the *Hymne à la paresse* (pp. 200–202), which follows a lengthy *Table générale des matières*. The text is furnished with marginal notes bearing bibliographical references.

3.1.4.2. Deslandes is well aware of the need for a clear periodization – referring to the contents specific to each age and not merely to a purely chronological framework – and in the *Préface* he outlines "an succinct summary of the History of Philosophy, naturally divided into four ages", in such a way as to provide a vision of the whole before moving on to a more detailed examination. The first age includes the philosophy of the "Barbarians" and goes "from the Flood up to the time when the Greeks passed into Egypt and Babylon there to draw on the taste for the sciences and the superior talents which they lacked" (*Histoire critique*, 1756 ed., I, pp. xxix–xxx). In this age men were left to their own devices, devoid of any "supernatural guide", incapable of knowing the purpose and the overall harmony of the universe. Nevertheless "ever since their origin they preserved numerous respectable traditions which had been handed down to them, whose original authors they did not know because their names had changed, or they pretended not to know for I do not know what vain reason. Without doubt these authors were very close to Noah: they were his sons or his grandsons; a respectable posterity, and one which could not yet have forgotten the great benefits [received] from above. It is true that these Traditions changed little by little, and there are more than enough reasons, some suggested by the mind and others inspired by the heart, which must have altered them. From this moment, man no longer thought about the dignity of his being and he dared to turn this same being against He from whom he had received it. From this moment on man forgot some of the points which it mattered most for him not to forget: for example, that unity is contained within the idea of the existence of God; that there will be unlimited rewards and punishments after this life [. . .]; that man's freedom can be reconciled with God's prescience; and finally, that such an embarrassing question as the origin of good and evil presupposes the degradation of the whole human race. Nevertheless, despite such disorders, in the great Nations a Body of Philosophy was always preserved which could still pass for a type of History, for a Theological compilation, and which consequently left no room for uninterrupted disputes and controversies" (I, pp. xxx–xxxii). The "barbarian" peoples are divided by Deslandes according to the classical geographical scheme: the Scythians to the north, the Ethiopians to the south, the Celts to the west, and the Indians (in the broad sense) to the east; the latter are subdivided into the Seres (Chinese and oriental Tartars), the Phoenicians, the Indians strictly speaking, the Persians, the Chaldeans (divided into four sects on the basis of the Book of Daniel), and the ancient Egyptians, according to an order which "is not in the least arbitrary

or whimsical, as one might think", but which conforms with "the various links in thought and discoveries which these Peoples had with each other" (I, p. 81). Within this scheme, the Hebrews occupy a place apart, and a whole chapter is devoted to them (Book I, Chapter V).

The second age is that of the Greeks: "enriched by all that the Orient then offered that was most precious", they marked a turning point in the method of philosophizing thanks to their great genius, which is judged however to be more agreeable than profound. While the most ancient thinkers "were content to recall simply and plainly the dogmas which they boasted of having embraced through an ancient Tradition", the Greeks "attached little importance to this tradition, which unfortunately had already been greatly weakened and degraded when it reached them. The Greeks considered all Philosophy to be a field left to their own research and whims. From here so many hypotheses and so many systems were born which had no reality, and which nevertheless required much intellectual finesse in their origin. [...] Thus a meticulous and systematic Philosophy succeeded a Philosophy founded on historical Tradition". Greek philosophy is subdivided into two periods. In the first "shone the Poet Philosophers; those who not only wrote poetry, but who also embraced by inclination Mythological Philosophy and hid all their knowledge under the guise of ingenious Fables" (I, p. 285). The second is characterized by the birth of the sects, the principal of which, in conformity with tradition, are the Ionian and the Italic, whose founders are examined in Book III. Deslandes does not place much emphasis on the "genealogies" of the various sects: he gathers together in a single book (IV) the sects founded by the disciples of Socrates, including Aristotle, and in the following Book V he reviews all the others, limiting himself to pointing out that the Eleatic sect is usually linked together with the Italic sect of Pythagoras.

The third age of philosophy is marked by the advent of Christ, who made available to all men a collection of truths previously reserved only for the Jews, thus removing uncertainties and errors. These acquisitions, although definitive, did not however bear all the fruit that might have been expected, due to certain erroneous intellectual attitudes: "some wanted to adapt Revelation to the fabulous sentiments of the Greeks; the true, commanded by faith, to the uncertain, adorned by apparent suppositions; and it often happened that they were neither Philosophers nor Christians. Others, respectful Interpreters, did nothing but admire, and to the solid pleasure of thought they preferred the laborious job of translating and commenting. Nothing but books made from other books were seen: men adorned themselves with the genius of the Ancients, as if Nature [by now] old had ceased to supply them with their own. Others, finally, just as obscure in their manner of understanding things as they were barbarous in their means of expressing them, and hence doubly unintelligible, ended up by altering and corrupting what common sense there remained in the world" (I, pp. xxxv–xxxvi). In this third period the philosophy inspired by Christianity comes intertwine itself with the philosophy of the Romans and the end of paganism: Book VIII, which opens with the birth of Christ and an examination of the changes produced by his doctrine, presents in succession the eclectic sect of Potamon, the emperor-philosophers of the second century, "theurgic philosophy" and the neo-Platonists, the Fathers of the Church, the decline of

the Western Empire, and the flourishing of thought in the Eastern Empire in the course of the Middle Ages (Photius, Leo the Philosopher, Michael Psellus, Anna Comnena). The philosophy of the Arabs and Latin Scholasticism are dealt with apart. The initiator of Scholasticism is given as John of Damascus, but it took a long time for this system to reach perfection. Taking up again the by now traditional framework, Deslandes distinguishes between three phases: the first goes from Lanfranc of Canterbury to Albert the Great; the second from Albert to Durand of St. Pourçain, characterised by the formation of three "parties" within the schools (Thomists, Scotists, Nominalists); and the third finishes with Gabriel Biel.

With the renaissance of letters in the fifteenth century a new era begins, one in which "flashes of light" spread from Italy throughout Europe and "the human race found itself renewed, and in an even more lofty and intimate way than it had been after the Flood, since this was a renaissance of minds (*esprits*). Here the fourth age of philosophy begins: this favourable age, whose periods are marked by some brilliant invention, by the discovery of some ancient error, or by sketches for a system which will one day serve to form the general system of the universe, or at least to show that one cannot be formed. Everything then seemed to be clothed in a new splendour" (I, p. xxxvii). The philosophers of the modern age are no longer divided into sects, but into nationalities, even though Deslandes reserves a chapter apart (XLV) to the followers of "occult" and cabalistic philosophy, and distinguishes two streams of renaissance thought, the Platonic and the Aristotelian, to which one must add the revival of Epicureanism with Valla (Chapter XLVIII, § 5) and Stoicism with Justus Lipsius (Chapter LVI, § 3). The author dwells on the renaissance of letters in Italy (Chapters XLVI–XLVIII) and then moves on to Germany and England, also examining Bacon and Hobbes; after several remarks on Spain and Portugal he devotes Chapters LIII–LV to the "renewal of letters and the fine arts in France", reaching the beginning of the *nouvelle philosophie*, where the narrative breaks off.

3.1.4.3. This examination of the periodization set out in the *extrait* has already revealed several basic lines of interpretation which become explicit in the course of discussion. Deslandes, we have seen, accepts the theory that the most ancient wisdom dates back to the sons of Noah (without however mentioning an "antediluvian" philosophy as Brucker on the other hand was to do), and the dependence of Greek philosophy on that of the "barbarians", characterising the latter as a "historical philosophy" founded on ancestral tradition. Taking up again themes dealt with in the introduction to Diogenes Laertius's *Lives*, he lays emphasis on the civic commitment of the ancient sages, in conformity with his conception of the ethical and social aim of philosophy: "And it is not to be believed that these sages and these philosophers were obscure or contemptible people, unknown to the great world, and suited only to living amongst the dust of a learned man's study. They were on the contrary the oracles of their country, modern and diligent men, who tried to be useful with a purified morality, and who took great pains and made every effort to create ever tighter links within society. [. . .] Kings, despite their pride of the throne, submitted themselves to their guidance; republics called them to the midst of the disturbances and the factions which were agitating them, and the people [. . .] at

times even reached the point of honouring them with a divine cult" (I, pp. 2–4). At the same time it is pointed out that "philosophy in the beginning was very different from what it is today. It was connected on one hand to religion, and on the other to politics; [. . .] due to the respect with which it was surrounded, philosophy wrapped itself in symbols and allegories, it became an 'enigmatic philosophy' reserved only for the initiated" (I, pp. 14 and 16–19; on p. 288 esotericism is presented as a general characteristic of all ancient philosophy; see also the *Discours* placed at the beginning of Vol. IV, pp. 8–9).

Deslandes does not devote a separate space to the culture of the New World, unlike Brucker, whose systematic treatment does not neglect the "philosophy" of the American Indians; nevertheless he shows himself to be up to date with the most recent travel literature, and inserts into the traditional scheme of "barbarian philosophy" several significant references to these peoples, who had by that time been revolving in the European orbit for more than two centuries. The myth of the virtuous savage comes to the fore in the juxtaposition of the ancient Scythians and the peoples of America, both of them reduced to a state of moral corruption by the deleterious influence of more evolved and refined civilizations; after quoting Strabo with regard to the Scythians, Deslandes adds a more recent testimony, taken from the *Histoire morale des Antilles*: "After Europe took possession of America by conquest and by means of barbarities which cannot be contemplated without horror, what vices, what crimes, what irregularities have we not introduced? The peoples of the New World relied on their ignorance, on a certain instinct of Nature, often more useful than Reason itself, and we have substituted in place of these goods which they were happy with goods that are false and dangerous; we have added to their misery by making them aware of new needs". In the course of a historical digression on writing, this theme is taken up again regarding the figures used by the ancient peoples of Mexico, which seem to contain a premonition of "the arrival of the cruel Europeans [. . .] which must have been at the same time so disastrous for them and so dishonourable to the name Christian" (I, pp. 40–41 and 61–62).

The juxtaposition of peoples distant in time and space does not mean however that Deslandes accepts the fantastic hypothesis of a possible historical link between such peoples, as in the case of the Hyperborean Scythians and the Hebrews: "Origen states, but without giving much of an explanation, that they [= the Scythians] had many dogmas in conformity with those of the Hebrews: a happy chance, on which we must congratulate the Scythians, since these dogmas", the author specifies, "could have been none other than an effect of their research and their analytical ability". After this, Deslandes makes several remarks which are interesting both for their theoretical assumptions and for their methodological implications: "I observe with regard to certain truths that must be called primitive and fundamental, that all the Peoples of the world seem to join hands with each other, either because these truths were in the first place very easy to discover, and they presented themselves to the mind, or because there exists a fixed point from which our thoughts must commence, and that this point is something independent of our whims and our uncertainties. It is an observation that it would be a good idea not to lose sight of, above all when one wishes to compare peoples very distant from one another. However much we may detect similarities and points of conformity between their language, their

physiognomy, and their customs, we must not for this reason confuse them and mix up them together. The human mind is of the same nature; consequently it may have the same sentiments regarding the things that touch it most closely, such as the principal attributes of God, the external cult, certain remarkable ceremonies, respect due to the dead. Entire Nations can find themselves in agreement on all these points, and have nevertheless very different origins. Circumcision, for example, was the special sign of the Alliance which God made with the Hebrews. Nevertheless it was used in Egypt and Ethiopia; traces of it have been found in many provinces of America. Should we perhaps think for this reason that the savages of the new World are of Hebrew origin, and should we perhaps not laugh at the famous knight William Penn [. . .] who has seriously affirmed this?" (I, pp. 46–47; on the following page the author criticizes the hypothesis of deriving every civilization and doctrine from the north, which was held by Thomas Burnet in particular).

Deslandes does not merely present the philosophy of the individual "barbarian" nations, but in the final two chapters of Book I – which are worthy of thorough analysis – he suggests "reducing to a system their principal thoughts", organizing them around three principles: "The first is that none of the Barbarian Philosophers [. . .] had any idea of either the creation or the end of the world: they did not even have a term in their languages, nor any figure of speech, which could express these two things. [. . .] In the second place, the Barbarian Philosophers sought merely to penetrate the infinite Art which directed the formation of the Earth: all the rest they believed to be immutable and incorruptible, subject only to apparent and not real alterations. [. . .] In the third place, the Barbarian Philosophers agreed on the fact that the first Motor, God, had presided over the formation of the Earth; but they also added that natural things, once they had received the movement that was suited to them, had so to speak, unfolded, and succeeded one another at the appropriate moment" (I, pp. 227–229). After examining in detail "the sentiments of the ancients regarding the origin of man" and "the various revolutions through which the world must pass", the author makes some remarks in particular on the ancient and modern millenarians (among whom he cites the English sect of the "men of the fifth monarchy"). He rejects the traditional thesis of the "senescence" of the world and notes, echoing the themes set out by Fontenelle, that men always remain the same: "Moreover, it is certain that all the centuries resemble each other, they counterbalance each other as far as most of the virtues and vices are concerned; and that men, despite the passions and prejudices they are susceptible to, present roughly the same moral spectacle" (I, pp. 249–250).

Deslandes pauses in particular to examination the diffusion amongst the ancients of the doctrine of the two principles, good and evil, taking up a theme which had already been developed by Bayle in several celebrated articles of the *Dictionnaire*. Far from condemning Manichaean dualism, the author justifies its origin with the double need to "save the goodness of God to the detriment of his power and to explain in a less harsh and revolting way the origin of moral and physical evil", which represents "the greatest difficulty which the human mind sets itself". Deprived of Revelation, the pagans could not formulate a better doctrine than dualism, which in fact constitutes "the favourite dogma of all peoples", even those

of the New World. This theme gives Deslandes the opportunity to launch into a long series of reflections, in which we can see, 20 years before Voltaire's *Candide*, a harsh criticism of the theory of the best of all possible worlds: "In effect, what were men left to their own ideas to think when they reflected on their wretched lot? When they saw in one and the same person so many thoroughly low, humiliating, unworthy actions, together with so many such sublime ingenious, and thorough reflections; such an immoderate desire to know the most useless of things, with such a great ignorance of what is most important; such long and extensive perspectives with a life so short and limited? Could they believe that the world was the work of a beneficent Being?" Deslandes's vision then widens out from man to nature in its entirety, in a sort of planetary projection of moralistic pessimism: the conformation of the world's surface itself, mostly covered by water and spiked with mountains, tormented at its extremities and at its centre by excesses of cold and heat, as well as by natural disasters of all sorts, leads us to believe that it is the work of an "inhuman stepmother" rather than a "tender mother". The human races themselves offer a disheartening spectacle, from which not even European civilization is exempt: "Africa can flaunt nothing but monsters, disgusting creatures, reduced to an instinct more gross than that of animals themselves. America is almost all similar, this vast and unfortunate land, cemetery to so many men butchered by betrayals and unheard-of cruelties, in which in order to satisfy our greed such shameful traffic still goes on. The Southern lands contain inhabitants in whom the human form is almost unrecognizable, and what remains is abominable. Asia seems in some places to be more cultivated. But again, what a culture! What a difference between what it is now and what it once was! How has such barbarity followed on from such civilization? [. . .] I will say nothing of Europe. What a mass of customs, systems, tastes, passions, laws, and usages do we find dispersed within it? In one Country people think in a way totally different from the way they do in another, and instead of tolerating one another reciprocally in this infinite variety of opinions, and of enduring with affability, they torment each other, kill each other in cold blood". The analysis goes on to denounce the existence of prejudices in every realm, city, and family, the prevalence of error over truth, and the spread of vice and immoderate luxury. Deslandes then moves on to the various political systems: "Here men are oppressed by tyrants who take malicious pleasure in dominating over their lives and their freedom [. . .] there they are joined in republics, each of which presents its own particular system. But what they have in common is that they have never been able to prevent the powerful from oppressing the weak, people of rank from taking advantage of all the privileges given to them by force, the rich from becoming even richer through the impoverishment of their vassals". The author's criticism is even directed against the "variety of tastes and sentiments" which men display in their family life and in their everyday conduct: these are, we can note, the same themes which Deslandes had intended to deal with separately, in his *histoire de l'esprit et du coeur humain*, and which he now subjects to an overall condemnation, better to justify the onset of dualism in pagan peoples. He contrasts this desolate spectacle with the certainties of Revelation, which through the ideas of original sin and the Incarnation has stopped men from going astray (I, pp. 267–277).

The evolution of Greek thought, shrouded in most ancient times by a "surprising barbarity", is summarized by the author at the beginning of Book III, where the fundamental concepts of the "fabulous philosophy" set out in Book II are taken up again. Deslandes describes a progression through a series of stages, from theological poetry to the first outlines of a "science of customs" with the seven Sages, until "all the parts of philosophy began to proceed regularly and seriously under Thales and Pythagoras", who were endowed in particular with a "genius for systems, a happy genius which allowed them to unite under a single perspective all the facets of an object. In the dawning of philosophy", the author continues, "there was a great amount of knowledge and ideas, which however remained scattered and disunited for a lack of order and connection". These observations present Deslandes with the opportunity for putting forward again a thesis which sees in the errors of the ancient philosophers the indispensable premise for the advancement of knowledge: "what they [= Thales and Pythagoras] said levelled the path, prepared the way, and perhaps (something no less important) saved us from the humiliating labour of saying it again. How many errors, how many fabulous inventions in which the spirit fritters away its time to no advantage, would we let slip still today if we had not been forewarned? What services, however circumspect and sensible we may be, do we not still render our grandchildren? There is a certain kind of fatality in the course of the Sciences, which still takes place with such prodigious slowness: everything that is chimerical, ridiculous, or useless must be exhausted before we can arrive at something precise and regulated; an infinity of men must err in order for other men to err no more" (II, pp. 2–4).

Deslandes offers an overall interpretation of Greek philosophy in the review of "thoughts and axioms capable of revealing the basis of the philosophy of the ancients" and in the *Discours où l'on examine ce que les anciens Philosophes pensoient de la Divinité*, placed at the beginning of volume IV. These two texts are interesting because, besides presenting a modern "reading" of the Greek philosophers, they offer us a glimpse of the author's personal convictions inspired by libertinism and deism, and somewhat unlike the orthodox positions he had expressed, for example, at the end of Book I (cf. Macary, *Masque et Lumières*, pp. 177ff, who observes, among other things, that with the expression *anciens en général* Deslandes does not mean historically outdated doctrines, but an "opinion based on the natural arms which man has at his disposal, reason and experience", and for this reason, still valid well into the eighteenth century). "The ancient philosophers", notes Deslandes in the *Discours*, "expressly recommended the study of Nature [...] as that which is most suitable and most advantageous to man, and that which can serve equally to enlighten his mind and to calm the tempests which agitate his heart. This study leads him by degrees to the true science, which, following the observations of Plato and Aristotle, by no means consists of knowing what writers knew or of weighing down one's memory with what is contained in books. It consists of making use of one's mind [...] according to the lights acquired". He continues by distinguishing a short-sighted "people incapable of reflection" (hence their need for fables and fictions) from the small number of philosophers, the only people who "tenderly love truth, or at least that small number of truths which Nature

has limited us to". These people "sought what is essential and what is captious, what is useful and what is frivolous in this mass of opinions, prejudices, usages, laws, and customs spread over the face of the Earth.[4] This is what once was, and still is today, the inheritance of the Friends of Science, these people who are called Philosophers". In opposition to idolatry, "the religion of imbecile peoples, who, immersed in base, gross pleasures, could not gaze fixedly at the Supreme Being, nor admire the wonders of this vast universe", Deslandes places "natural religion, which has in no way had recourse to the aid of fables" and which was practiced by the founders of the great monarchies, by philosophers and legislators. Its "principal merit" is its "simplicity": "nothing that concerns it and surrounds it is either obscure or mysterious". It has only two principles: worship of God and "doing all the good one is capable of". "In natural religion every man is a priest. The altar at which he sacrifices is the entire Universe resplendent with innumerable marvels and wonders, penetrated by Divinity. This religion does not admit seducers, enthusiasts, people who, in order to deceive others more daringly, pretend to have been deceived themselves first" (*Histoire critique*, IV, pp. 4–12).

In the *Discours*, Deslandes indicates God and matter as the "two principal objects which captured the attention of the ancient philosophers", whom he divides into two broad categories. To the first belong those who "believed that God and matter are two first principles, which, with eternal knots which cannot be untied, form the Whole, the Universe. God is the supreme intelligence [...] Matter is the immediate organ of God. [...] Their union constitutes everything, which alone deserves the name of substance [...] Matter is the effect, God is the cause. The link which subjects one to the other is beneficent Nature". These are the "more reasonable" philosophers, in so far as they distinguish God from matter, like Anaxagoras, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Matter however is not seen as "something dead, inanimate. It is on the contrary living and penetrated by an internal force, by a secret vigour, unknown to us, which renders it capable of passing through all the possible forms following the various laws of gravity, attraction, electricity, magnetism, sympathy, or affinity, etc. [these are the same premises on which the story of Pygmalion and his animate Statue is based]. It is full of individual lives, of indivisible, incorruptible souls [...]. 'All nature', remarks Pliny, 'is animated'..." (IV, pp. 14–18).

The second category includes those who confused God and matter, "supposing only a single substance in the Universe, from which everything is formed and to which everything must be reduced. Such a system, admitting that it is deserving of the name, excludes every Divinity, every spiritual substance, and limits itself to Matter subject to destiny. But what is destiny? I doubt these philosophers known as Pantheists had any clear idea". Following in the footsteps of Jean Bodin, Deslandes distinguishes a "very rough and very confused Naturalism" (which he also calls

[4]Deslandes takes up again, to the letter, the expressions he had used in the last chapter of Book I, offering with the exercise of philosophy a positive response to the disheartening and pessimistic diagnosis given there.

"pure Materialism" and which consists of affirming that "everything that our eyes fall on, everything that happens, ends with modifications which derive from the bosom of Matter, which only last for a certain time") from a "rough Naturalism", that is to say, one which "does not admit revelation and thinks that the natural law suffices to render us happy in the after-life, and sees in Christ not a God but a simple prophet", as the Socinians and the Latitudinarians profess. A third form is the "subtle Naturalism" of the Pelagians, who do not recognize original sin (IV, pp. 24–26). Inspired by the article on Spinoza in Bayle's *Dictionnaire*, Deslandes cites Straton of Lampsacus as one of the most ardent Pantheists, followed by Xenophanes and the Stoics, observing that "on the relics and ruins of all these ancient opinions Baruch Spinoza established a system which was unfortunately too renowned**,** which he tried to endow with I do not know what semblance of a demonstration", and he cites here Buddeus's *De Spinozismo* (IV, pp. 27–30).

The final paragraphs of the *Discours* are devoted to atheism. Deslandes groups atheists into four sects, rejecting however the tendency to enlarge the number of atheists as Father Mersenne had done. Alluding to Naudé's *Apologie*, he points out that "in the centuries of ignorance, those who possessed a knowledge surpassing that of other men were accused of magic. This accusation was carried so far that an apology in the appropriate form was needed to destroy it entirely. When times became more enlightened, this frivolous accusation which no longer excited anything but the laughter of the judge and even that of the people, was turned into that of atheism [a note refers to Wolf's *Dissertatio de Atheismi falso suspectis*]. All the philosophers of the seventeenth century and a portion of those of the next century have been suspected of it: some indeed, under this hateful pretext, have suffered maltreatment. At such a point the spirit of intolerance united with that of falsehood has prevailed in all religions". Deslandes also touches on Bayle's theory that atheism is a lesser evil with respect to superstition and idolatry, noting that "Mr. Bayle sought to prove that religion, however much it may illuminate the mind, has no influence whatsoever on customs, and that in order to live in conformity with reason one must simply follow natural lights, without seeking recourse to any revelation" (IV, pp. 39–40 and 41–42; in the following pages the author strongly criticizes superstition, judged, following Bacon, to be more dangerous to the peace of nations than atheism itself).

Moving on now to the interpretation of some of the key figures of ancient thought, it must be pointed out first of all that as far as the space reserved for the major philosophers is concerned, the chart is topped by Plato who is dealt with in 50 pages, followed by Pythagoras (39), Socrates (33), Aristotle (28), Zeno and Stoicism (23), Epicurus (21), and Thales (15). Speaking of Socrates the author dwells in particular on his "genius" which is not interpreted as a real being, half-way between God and man, as it had been by Plutarch: for Deslandes it is none other than "enlightened reason, a superior and constant wisdom, an art of foreseeing the future with just reflections on the past and the present". The reaction of Socrates to the accusations brought against him is compared to that of the Christian martyrs, but Deslandes disapproves of the philosopher's refusal to escape from prison, because "men must be spared what is an evident and certain crime", and because "the concern for self-preservation is the first of all laws, since we must live [in order to] be happy,

wherever we place happiness: afterwards we force ourselves to live according to the precepts of reason, and the various norms of the society in which we live" (II, pp. 123, 135, 137). In dealing with the works of Plato, Deslandes draws on Bayle's *Continuation des Pensées diverses* (an author, he notes, "so refined in his critical judgement"), and distinguishes clearly between their pleasant form, full of allurements, and their contents, set out in an unequal and contradictory fashion. The "world system" described in the *Timaeus* is defined as "the best piece of Theology-Physics which has ever come down to us from the hands of the ancients not yet enlightened by divine Revelation". Besides the *Timaeus*, Deslandes also draws on Plotinus, Proclus, and Maximus of Tyre, in such a way that the "system" of Plato he reconstructs is in reality neo-Platonic. Deslandes dwells at length on the question of Plato's knowledge of Scripture, placing himself distinctly in opposition to those writers who "had no difficult in Christianizing Plato and placing him almost on the same level as the prophets"; in reality, he declares in the words of Richard Simon, "these are vain imaginations and pious fancies". Deslandes likewise rejects the juxtaposition of the "Platonic trinity" with the Christian one, considering as unlikely the hypothesis that the Greek philosopher was able to gather in Egypt "the first seeds of the dogma of the Trinity" that were then spread by Moses. Analysing the structure of the alleged Platonic Trinity, he reaches the conclusion that in reality for Plato there is only one God, even if this doctrine is not set out very clearly. The fact that in several passages Plato speaks of three Gods is attributed to the need not to counter the prevailing polytheistic prejudices, so as not to meet the same fate as Socrates (II, pp. 223–240; on pp. 240–244, the author examines the meaning of the term *logos* in the writings of Plato and the Platonists).

Deslandes takes up a balanced position with regard to Aristotle, avoiding both total condemnation and unconditioned praise, and emphasizing the historical and cultural circumstances which in the previous centuries had prevented the formation of a detailed and impartial evaluation of the Greek philosopher. Indeed "neither one nor the other, neither the panegyrists nor the critics, have spoken of him as they should. When use of the Greek language was extremely common, good philosophy was not sufficiently known; and when facts and experiences had increased the dominion of philosophy, the point was reached where the Greek language was no longer known, and the originals were replaced by commentators who were hardly worthy of being consulted" (II, pp. 271–272). Logic is considered to be the discipline in which Aristotle succeeded best. The author draws heavily on Vives in his presentation of Aristotelian physics, but he also turns to Rapin, of decidedly the opposite tendency to Vives, with regard to *physica particularis*: "the curious Father Rapin, in his comparison of the sentiments of Aristotle and Plato, has stated something that seems to me to be particularly true, and that is that the first of his four books on Meteors has clarified more effects of nature than all the modern philosophers put together [...] In effect, even with all the errors that he let slip for want of experience and the lack of some of the discoveries which chance has offered the Moderns, we realize that he followed the thread of nature closely, and guessed things that must have been unknown". The overall judgement on Aristotle is however negative and is taken from the *Novum Organum*: "the essential defect of Aristotle's

philosophy is that it accustoms us little by little to do without evidence, and to put words in the place of things: it removes that intellectual courage and that freedom of intelligence which alone can lead to the most sublime discoveries" (II, pp. 287 and 290–291). The author's personal sympathy on the other hand goes out to figures like Epicurus, model of coherence and rectitude: "Totally unlike the character of those who defile with their conduct what they have exalted to the skies with their words, Epicurus knew how to think and to live like a philosopher". This sympathy does not only invest moral qualities, but also the concept of the gods and providence, which is justified with a reflection in which the reference to the Greek gods seems to extend ambiguously to divinity itself, and it recalls earlier considerations on the "badly-made" character of our world: "In any case, if the world were subject to their power, it would be well run in an admirable fashion, and everything would come about in a way worthy of these wise and enlightened Gods who would govern it; however we see the opposite. Is it not perhaps clear proof, an open testimony that chance presides over everything, and that the hand of God has no part in it whatsoever?" (II, pp. 360 and 346).

Scholastic thought appears to be profoundly removed from Deslandes's interests and tastes: "The suffering of the traveller who crosses arid and uncultivated countryside is no greater than that of the reasonable spirit obliged by duty to take an interest in the Scholastics, to read either the 21 folio volumes of Albert the Great or the 12 of John Duns Scotus. [. . .] Nevertheless, some writers have believed that such reading, for those who have the courage to undertake it, might be useful in some respects: even the judicious Mr. Leibniz has not hesitated in saying that there is gold hidden among all that Scholastic manure. [. . .] But perhaps too much care and too many vigils are required to extract it. A mine is abandoned when the effort of excavating it becomes greater than the profit which we hope to extract from it" (III, pp. 269–271). Deslandes reproaches the Scholastics with not having managed to establish "a just relationship between philosophy and theology", whose "interests and rights are separate", since "theology begins where philosophy leaves off". This theme suggests several interesting considerations of a more general nature regarding the relations which have been forged, from the origin of Christianity up until the modern age, between revealed truth and rational investigation, historically concretized, from period to period, in what Deslandes defines in a well-chosen expression, as the "dominant philosophy": "Right from the origins of Christianity, those who have set themselves the task of defending and illustrating it have always linked themselves to the dominant philosophy, and they have not despised the various proofs which it supplied them with. The first Fathers of the Church chose Plato as the most sublime and subtle author to have appeared in Greece. The Scholastics, as I have just demonstrated, followed in the footsteps of Aristotle; after the rebirth of good studies, it is Descartes who, despite innumerable contradictions, has been preferred. I dare not decide which of the three parties takes pre-eminence. They have each had their supporters. I will merely say that Plato has rendered Christianity too abstract and too metaphysical; that Aristotle has rendered it too thorny and based too heavily on words; and finally Descartes, seeking to lead it back to its primitive simplicity, has weakened some of its proofs. There is a danger", the author comments, "in wishing

to make religion too little mysterious. It is enough to think of Mr. Locke, the famous Toland, and some other Englishman, whose writings are well-enough known" (III, pp. 295–297).

The transition from the Middle Ages to the Modern Age is mediated, in the final chapter of Book III, by "several philosophers who had singular ideas" and who with the free exercise of reason renewed knowledge and fought against prejudice: Roger Bacon, Raymond Lull, Arnald of Villanova, Peter of Abano, Girolamo Cardano, and Paracelsus (III, pp. 323–344; the emphasis on these writers in particular is probably inspired by Naudé's *Apologie*). The rebirth of letters is attributed to three causes: "The first was the example of several people of genius and taste, who, from the fourteenth century onwards, began to acquire a sense of their own strength and to shake off the yoke of barbarities. Such were Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. [. . .] The second was the enlightened protection, even transforming itself into a noble familiarity, which most princes who lived then granted to men of culture. [. . .] The third finally was the arrival of several Greeks, who left their native land willingly and who came to live in Venice". To the latter can be added those Greeks who fled Constantinople in 1453, and it is precisely from this year that "the rebirth of letters must be calculated". Besides these fundamental causes Deslandes also cites the invention of printing, which happened at an opportune moment: "it seemed that beneficent nature who made the sciences flourish again wanted to facilitate the means of cultivating them, by multiplying the number of books and giving these books editions which became more correct from day to day". Thanks to the combination of these causes and in particular the "great ferment" introduced into Italy by the Greek scholars, "the fifteenth century became a most brilliant century: and if we do not find in it the precision and rigour of reason which will later shine, and which was generally approved of by a more philosophical century, at least we find there some bright lights, a pure, sober diction, a beautiful eloquence, pleasant and ingenious". Deslandes then continues by analyzing the characteristics of the Renaissance (in which recourse to the Ancients, necessary to free men from the "profound ignorance" of the Middle Ages, ended up by becoming an "idolatrous love of Antiquity") and the successive transition to the "philosophical century" in which scholars distanced themselves from the Ancients and "reason regained her rights and men began to see with their own eyes what they had been incapable of seeing through the eyes of others" (IV, pp. 69–77).

The theme of the comparison between the two centuries is taken up again further on, on pp. 84–87 and above all pp. 177–179, where Deslandes draws on considerations made by Bayle and Rapin (cf. above, Chapter 2, para 1.3.4), and notes that this is "the course of the progress that the *esprit humain* has visibly accomplished", pausing to consider the five factors which determined the birth and the development of the new philosophy: the reassertion of the rights of reason with regard to authority, proclaimed by Descartes; the use of clear, distinct ideas, which lent strength and order to philosophy; the recourse to mathematics; the availability of instruments and "ingeniously-constructed machines"; and the reunion of the sciences, which in the sixteenth century had been dispersed, in such a way that they could aid one other: it was in this way that Bacon collected "all the exact and useful sciences in a kind of Encyclopaedia, not for reasons of vanity, but in order to be able to educate

others, after having educated himself" (IV, pp. 181–183). Besides Bacon, "father of experimental philosophy", Deslandes extols the figure of Descartes, even though he recognizes that at that time "a part of his philosophy has been placed out of use". He is critical, on the other hand, of Hobbes' political doctrines regarding the "state of pure nature", which he judges to be inadmissible; he accepts his political system as a whole, however, as set out in the *De cive*, pointing out all the same that, "given that it supposes all kings to be perfect and their will to be in conformity with reason, this system can only be followed with some reductions which conform to the present state of affairs" (IV, pp. 144–145).

3.1.4.4. The methodological guidelines expressed in the *Préface* are accompanied by a historiographical approach which goes beyond the traditional schemes (a rigorous concatenation of sects, biographies, and doxographical collections) to take the form of a continuous and organic (*suivie*) discussion, in which the author's presence is felt in his critical remarks on the reliability of the sources, and above all in his frequent *réflexions*, which involve the reader in the assessment and the "fruition" of the doctrines of the past. The intention to go beyond a fragmentary compilation and to seize the "main points" of an epoch is reflected, as we have seen, in the *extrait* on periodization and in the final chapter of Book I, where the historical presentation of the various barbarian nations is followed by a thematic discussion in which ancient doctrines are reduced to an articulated and coherent "system". The *Discours, où l'on examine ce que les anciens Philosophes pensoient de la Divinité* itself (written as an alternative to pure compilations like Burigny's *Théologie payenne*[5]) reveals the need to focus on several common and essential nuclei, beyond the extreme variety of doctrines, and to make them not only matter for reflection, but also a vehicle for the transmission of Deslandes's innermost thoughts. Undoubtedly the tendency to "sketch" the general characteristics of an epoch and to "reduce the principal thoughts to a System" can be linked to the popular aim of the *Histoire critique*, the work of an "amateur" who addresses a vast and not a specialist public; nevertheless this taste for characterizing the great epochs does not seem merely to be inspired by the purpose of summarizing and simplifying, and it is worth asking whether beneath the attempt to grasp the "genius" of an epoch there does not lie that "theme of the *Zeitgeist*" which Garin noted in the context of the *histoire de l'esprit humain* (see above, para 3.1.3.).

Alongside this tendency to form an overall interpretation it is also worth noting Deslandes's frequent use of digressions within the structure of the *Histoire critique*, even ones of an extra-philosophical nature, which render the narrative lively and interesting and which work to the detriment of the systematic format. Inspired probably by the example of Bayle's *Dictionnaire*, Deslandes does not hesitate to insert into the text the results of his most varied reading: a passing reference by Thomassin

[5] *Histoire critique*, IV, p. 4: "Ils ne rapportent gueres que les Sentences, des Apophthegmes, des Pensées isolées, qui ne fournissent aucune instruction suivie. J'en pourrois citer ici plusieurs exemples; mais on ne peut ouvrir aucun Livre qui traite de la Théologie Payenne ou de la Vertu des Payens, qu'on n'en soit rassasié".

to Solomon's alleged knowledge of hydrology gives him the opportunity, for example, of relating a physical experiment published in the *Philosophical Transactions*, while the discussion of Chinese philosophy leads him to digress on their various types of cloth and the use of spiders to produce silk (I, pp. 88–90 and 193–197). This practice was to be severely criticized by Brucker in the name of a rigorous definition of the "object" of philosophy and the distinction between the latter and "general erudition". It is worth noting, in this case too, that Deslandes's way of "writing the history of philosophy" reflects that taste for varied historical, philosophical, and scientific popularization which characterizes French culture of this period, and which had already been expressed in Gautier's *Bibliothèque des philosophes* (it too the object of Brucker's criticism).

On closer examination however, this judgement appears reductive and too conditioned by Brucker's own historiographical perspective. In reality, the extra-philosophical digressions of the *Histoire critique* are no more than the consequence of the wide and multi-comprehensive concept of "philosophy" which Deslandes, *philosophe sans livrée,* open to all aspects of human civilization, had theorized in the *Préface,* and which is very different from the programmatic eclecticism which Brucker had in his sights. Deslandes's methodological "errors" are therefore fully coherent with his view of a *histoire de l'esprit humain*, which – and this is the most interesting aspect – does not seem to turn into a *histoire des sciences et des arts* built on the disciplines of the polyhistoric tradition. In his digressions indeed, Deslandes does not simply re-examine the themes of seventeenth-century erudition, such as the geographical position of earthly paradise or the history of writing, but he touches on subjects of an anthropological, sociological, and linguistic nature which signal by now the beginnings of the *science de l'homme*: an interest in the origin of myths and ritual practices, an emphasis on the influence of climate in the development of culture, an interest in the role played by language in the characterization of culture, and indirectly on the very structure of thought, an allusion to the theory of the man-machine which was dominant in the medico-anthropological conception of the age, the value attributed to primitive civilizations, and so on (I, pp. 35–36, 81–81, 98; II, pp. 278–279; III, pp. 259–260). Yet this interest for the *science de l'homme* which punctuates the *Histoire critique de la philosophie* does not stop at pure anecdotal curiosity: in combination with the *esprit critique*, it gives rise to a more open mentality and categories of judgement which go beyond traditional Eurocentrism. It is significant, for example, that the author criticizes the Christian missionaries' poor knowledge of Arabic culture and rejects as a false prejudice the accusation of a corrupt life typically aimed at Muslims (III, pp. 236–238). It is with these unexpected and at times disconcerting "intrusions" that the genre of *historia philosophica* adapted itself to the tastes and the cultural demands of the early Enlightenment. The assertion of new forms of knowledge, whose relation with philosophy had not yet been properly worked out, was in any case to generate a crisis of identity in philosophy itself, which was no longer able to define its own "object" precisely: hence the failure to "define the field" precisely enough, and the recourse to materials and documents which seem heterogeneous to someone, like Brucker, who was not affected by this crisis of identity.

Within this general context, the model adopted by Deslandes in the discussion of the most important philosophers presents no innovations: the summary of the life is followed, in some cases at least, by an examination of the accusations brought against the philosopher in question and a judgement on his works, and then by an account of his thought, which contains Deslandes's own assessment, so as to emphasize "what is commendable or reprehensible in these dogmas". Deslandes's judgement also includes questions of method: in line with the theoretical considerations outlined in the *Préface* he criticizes, for example, those who have attempted to deduce an explanation of nature from Scripture, which cannot be called on to help in scientific questions: "Moses, David, or Solomon should never be made to speak in the same way that Galileo, Copernicus, Gassendi, Descartes, or Malebranche would speak" (I, pp. 169–170, where numerous supporters of the "conformity" between the Old Testament and science are cited). Given the approach adopted in the *Histoire critique* the sources used in it are extremely varied, both for reasons of content and because of the author's orientation: in the historical discussion and the accompanying *réflexions* Deslandes uses, for example, writers such as Richard Simon, Bossuet, La Mothe Le Vayer, Naudé, Huet, Bochart, Pascal, and Malebranche, together, naturally, with Bayle's *Dictionnaire*. Among the modern historians of philosophy he cites Stanley, Vossius, Hornius, Jonsius, Ménage, Rapin, and Thomassin. Seventeenth-century erudition occupies an important place, above all as far as the numerous digressions of Book I are concerned, whereas Book IV often has recourse to works of civil and political history.

3.1.5. A detailed reconstruction of the fortune of the *Histoire critique* in the literary world of the eighteenth century has already been undertaken by Geissler (*Boureau-Deslandes*, pp. 48–59); the following consideration therefore will be limited to the most significant aspects from the point of view of the history of philosophical historiography. It is Deslandes himself who notes with satisfaction, in the *Avertissement* to volume IV, the favourable reception his work had received in the journals of the period (see above, para 3.1.3, note 3). The reviews which appeared in the *Bibliothèque françoise* and the *Bibliothèque raisonnée* were particularly lengthy and also contained several critical remarks. The latter, for example, judged the thesis whereby all pagan thinkers "limit the duration and the hopes of man to the brief moment of this life" as exaggerated, since, if it is impossible to know with purely natural forces "the state of the soul after death", it is not impossible for reason "to persuade itself that the destruction of the body does not necessarily involve that of the soul". Further on the reviewer, revealing his apologetic and religious concerns, expresses his bewilderment over the way in which the figure of Epicurus is presented: "I am not able to conceive how it is possible for [the author], with all his discernment, to have been able to lend allure to such unworthy (*lâche*) and contradictory behaviour. Why not criticise it as it deserves?" (BR, XXI, 1738, pp. 175 and 407; the concerns of the reviewer were not without foundation, since the *Histoire critique* was present, for example, in the library of Helvétius and is quoted on more than one occasion in the *De l'esprit*).

The *Histoire critique* enjoyed considerable fortune, even outside the French border: according to commercial registers, at least thirty copies of the work entered the

Venetian Republic (cf. Piva, *Cultura francese e censura*, p. 151). It was mentioned in Genovesi's *Disputatio physico-historica* and Tennemann's systematic bibliography, where it is included among the general histories of philosophy. But the most interesting aspect of Deslandes's "fortune" as a historian of philosophy regards without doubt his relations with the Encyclopaedists, who secretly used the *Histoire critique* in the compilation of articles such as *Aristotélisme*, *Création*, *Immatérialisme*, and *Manichéisme*. The editors of the *Encyclopédie* responded to the accusations of plagiarism made by the *Mémoires de Trévoux* and Fréron's *Année littéraire* by also alluding to Deslandes, whose contribution to the article *Aristotélisme* they play down with respect to that of Brucker: "If the Author has judged that he could insert some extracts from the work of M. Deslandes in it, these extracts do not represent more than a tenth part. The rest is a substantial and reasoned extract from Brucker's history of philosophy, a modern work much admired by foreigners, so little known in France" (*Encyclopédie*, Vol. III, Paris 1753, p. ix; cf. Carr, *Deslandes*, p. 155, where it is revealed that in reality out of the 40 columns in the article, a good 8 are taken from the *Histoire critique*).

The juxtaposition of Deslandes and Brucker carries with it further implications, if we take into consideration the fact that the German scholar had expressed a highly negative judgement on the *Histoire critique* in his *Dissertatio praeliminaris*, pointing out the confusion it introduced between philosophy and general erudition (the texts of Brucker's criticism are given in Chapter 8, para 8.1.7.4 and 8.1.9). Cut to the quick, Deslandes replied in the new edition of his *Histoire critique*, criticising in turn the errors into which his adversary had fallen: after touching on the publication of the *Historia critica*, he declares himself to be "of the opposite opinion from that of the celebrated authors of the Encyclopaedia", and states that the *Historia* is a "tiresome compilation [. . .] more than a thoughtful work (*un ouvrage réfléchi*). Brucker", he continues, "has read without much discernment and has written without any grace; and however much the gentlemen of the Encyclopaedia may insist that his work will offer grounds for ample reflection, I for my part will take the liberty of saying that more than half is of a prolixity and hence a futility without equal. In effect, to what use can the first two volumes possibly be? What do they teach us, if not follies and absurdities drawn from the most ancient peoples, most of which come from some ignorant and superstitious moderns who have peddled their fancies for truth? Would it not have been easier for me to have filled a volume with the supposed systems of the Persians and the Chaldeans, about whom we find nothing but a few ill-assorted scraps in Antiquity, and which some visionaries stitched together at the time of the decline of the Empire of Constantinople? Would it not have been even easier for me to imitate the German Brucker and to offer the public a circumstantiated volume on the Cabalistic Philosophy of the Hebrews and the Jews? It seems to me that I have said everything that is needed to know in my Critical History of Philosophy; and [if] Brucker should accuse me of excessive conciseness and brevity, I will naively confess that I would have been sorry to say more; and if in his eyes it is an advantage to be long-winded and prolix, then I prefer, having examined everything thoroughly, to be short and judicious" (*Histoire critique*, IV, pp. v–vii).

The polemic between the two historians of philosophy did not cease with the death of Deslandes and took on even harsher tones with the intervention of Formey, the secretary of the Berlin Academy of Sciences, who in the introduction to his *Histoire abrégée de la philosophie* undertook a thorough demolition job on the work of Deslandes, with the clear intention of "clearing the field" of an awkward competitor. Formey justified the publication of a new history of philosophy in French by the inadequacy of Deslandes's work both in its style and its interpretative errors. The latter, he insinuates, are sometimes made deliberately by the author himself, who is accused of being an *esprit fort* and of having retracted his works only on his deathbed and then in an ambiguous manner. In this crescendo of accusations (among which that of "shameless Epicureanism", motivated by some lines from the poem *Mon Cabinet*), Formey dwells above all on those relating to style, to which readers' taste was particularly sensitive. He places great emphasis on the negative and ironic comments which Voltaire had added as notes to several passages of the *Histoire critique* and in which Deslandes is defined as a "vieil Écolier précieux", who uses the insipid (*fade*) and monotonous style of a provincial (*quel stil de plat bel-esprit Provincial!*). Formey's criticisms, which also attacked the moral figure of the deceased Deslandes, were taken up again by Brucker in the volume of supplements to his *Historia critica*, and are also found in the *Prefazione* to Buonafede's *Istoria e indole di ogni filosofia*, where the author, however, assumes a more detached attitude, not being directly involved in the controversy. The Abbé Sabatier de Castres also contributed to Deslandes's "demolition", defining him "a mean philosopher and a mediocre man of letters, despite all the success he has met with and all those praises attributed to him. His only merit consists of some anecdotes on the ancient philosophers, which lead those who do not know that the Author has drawn almost all of these from Diogenes Laertius and Ménage's notes to suppose study and research". Maleville in turn, in his *Histoire critique de l'éclectisme*, presents the *Histoire critique* as "a superficial work, but one with a pleasant style, which has enjoyed a certain popularity which it certainly did not deserve". Equally negative is the verdict formulated at the beginning of the nineteenth century by Degérando: "The opinions of the philosophers on all arguments are indicated rather than set out; he has accumulated without demonstrating any affiliations; nothing is investigated in depth, nothing is connected". The criticism of Deslandes put forward in Hamann's *Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten* (Amsterdam, 1759) belongs to a totally different perspective: Hamman, a pre-Romantic thinker whom we have already mentioned in connection with the fortune of Rapin's *Réflexions sur la philosophie ancienne et moderne* (see above, Chapter 1, para 1.3.6), condemns *en bloc* the modern history of philosophy, which is worshiped like an "idol" in the "temple of erudition", and he ironically compares Deslandes's small volumes with those "Chinese dolls which decorate fireplaces", as compared to the "colossuses" provided by Stanley or Brucker: but in both case, for Hamann, we are still dealing with a lifeless historical work. . .

Brucker's criticism and Voltaire and Sabatier's malicious verdicts cast Deslandes's *Histoire critique* into shadow, and the work was ignored both in the survey placed at the beginning of Hegel's *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* and

Cousin's *Cours de philosophie*. Deslandes is included however in the *Dictionnaire des sciences philosophiques*, where the article on him was written by none other than Adolphe Franck, and is of particular interest as it passes a judgement which is impartial, even though attentive to aspects of a spiritualistic orientation. Franck appreciates the "ideas of impartiality and moderation" expressed in the *Préface*, "totally unexpected in a philosopher of the eighteenth century". He holds Sabatier's observation to be unjust and points out that Deslandes did not only take from Laertius, but shows an in-depth knowledge of "all the Latin writers, ancient or modern, who can shed some light on the philosophical systems of Antiquity". Among the negative aspects he lists the exorbitant amount of space dedicated to "fabulous traditions" and the most varied digressions, and the total neglect of chronology, "so important in the history of the succession of ideas"; as far as the content is concerned, Franck does not approve of such excessive indulgence shown to the moral doctrines of Aristippus and Epicurus and the overly severe judgement on Plato and the Alexandrians. In the eyes of Franck the most negative aspect, however, is constituted by the reappearance, "in its general inspiration and in detail", of the "spirit of the eighteenth century": "Thus it is easy to see that the statements of respect towards religious dogmas have the purpose of hiding, or rather of expressing in a decent form his scepticism in metaphysics and his sensualist principles in moral philosophy". At the end of the article he recognizes that "despite these enormous defects, the *Histoire critique*, which once enjoyed such great success, can still be read today with interest, we would almost say with profit" (DSPh, II, pp. 62–65).

The re-evaluation initiated by Franck did not have an immediate effect. Only in the past few years has there been any rebirth of interest in the figure and the works of Deslandes, thanks to the monographs by Geissler and Macary. This interest has developed along two lines: the first concerns the place occupied by the author within the movement of the *Lumières* and, in particular, his materialistic orientation, referring above all to *Pigmalion, ou la Statue animée*; the second regards the characteristics of the *Histoire critique* and its place in the evolution of the genre of the history of philosophy. The most notable contributions to this field have been provided by Garin, Braun, Del Torre, and Gueroult: Garin has set the author in the context of the genesis of the "critical" history of philosophy, pointing out at the same time several thematic connections with d'Alembert and even Hegel; besides those characteristics which in Deslandes come to take on the notion of "criticism" with respect to Bayle and Heumann, Braun has examined the relationship between Revelation and the history of philosophy; and Del Torre has undertaken an analytical reconstruction of the methodological ideas underpinning the *Histoire critique* and its historiographical content, in correlation with the problems and the demands of French society at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Last from an editorial point of view, but first from a chronological one, is the interpretation offered by Martial Gueroult in his *Histoire de l'histoire de la philosophie*, which came out posthumously in 1984, edited by Ginette Dreyfus, but in reality dating back to 1939–1940. Deslandes's historiographical work is placed here under the direct influence of Fontenelle, from whom Deslandes allegedly took his interest in the historical origins of myths and doctrines, and hence in their

relative nature. It is a "seductive programme" which should have had a dual effect: "to remove the history of philosophy from a conception of the history of sects, to introduce it into a temporal dimension, and at the same time to penetrate it with philosophy by means of the discovery of the internal and profound link of the genetic and progressive explanation". But, according to Gueroult, Deslandes revealed himself to be "incapable of applying these good general ideas" and remained tied to the framework of the traditional history of sects. In the end "he has no other interest for us than to have conceived of a new programme and to have been the first to attempt to introduce the Cartesian spirit into a general history of philosophy" (Gueroult, pp. 306–308). In other words, the *Histoire critique de la philosophie* revealed itself to be a true flop ... In reality this negative opinion is greatly influenced by Gueroult's own theoretical positions, which lead him to project Deslandes's work forwards rather than to grasp it in its context and in its effective intentions. As for the gap between the programmatic declarations and their concrete realization in historiographical practice, it represents a limit inherent in every "general" history of philosophy, caught between the desire to innovate and the existence of a rich and well-consolidated historiographical "canon" (the "tradition"): a precious, but demanding inheritance, which in some way conditions us with its *Faktizität*, but which must be dealt with and evaluated by taking into account the requirements of the time. Something that the modest and provincial Deslandes, *philosophe sans livrée*, tried in some way to do.

3.1.6. On Deslandes's life, works, and thought as a whole see the monographs by Geissler and Macary and the systematic bibliography contained in them: R. Geissler, *Boureau-Deslandes. Ein Materialist der Frühaufklärung* (Berlin, 1967); J. Macary, *Masque et Lumières au XVIIIe. André-François Deslandes "citoyen et philosophe", 1689–1757* (The Hague, 1975). Cf. also the more recent works: R. Geissler, "Boureau-Deslandes lecteur de manuscrits clandestins?", in *Le matérialisme du XVIIIe siècle et la littérature clandestine*, pp. 226–233; M.-A. Bernier, "Mécanique des sensations et conception du mariage dans *Pigmalion, ou la Statue animée* de Boureau-Deslandes", in *Sexualité, mariage et famille au XVIIIe siècle*, eds. O.B. Cragg (Sainte-Foy [Québec], 1998), pp. 145–157; *Pygmalion des lumières: Houdar de La Motte, Boureau-Deslandes, Saint-Lambert, Jullien dit Desboulmiers, J.-J. Rousseau, Baculard d'Arnaud, Rétif de la Bretonne*, ed. H. Coulet (Paris, 1998); A. Deneys-Tunney, "Le roman de la matière dans *Pigmalion, ou la Statue animée* (1741) d'A.-F. Deslandes", in *Être matérialiste à l'âge des Lumières*, eds. B. Fink and G. Stenger (Paris, 1999), pp. 93–110; F. Salaün, "Le rire des esprits forts. La réhabilitation du rire dans les *Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant*", *Dix-huitième siècle*, XXXII (2000), pp. 213–225; Id., "La question de la double doctrine en France de Deslandes à d'Holbach", in *Leo Strauss: art d'écrire, philosophie, politique*, ed. L. Jaffro et al. (Paris, 2001), pp. 221–237; S. Drouin, "Allégorisme et matérialisme dans *Pigmalion, ou la Statue animée* d'A.-F. Deslandes", *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, VII (2003), pp. 383–393; Id., "Représentation de la perception et empirisme dans *Pigmalion, ou la Statue animée* d'A.-F. Deslandes", in *Savoirs et fins de la représentation*

sous l'ancien régime (Québec, 2005), pp. 131–142; B. Roukhomovsky, *Des effets merveilleux de l'optique*. Un conte méconnu d'A.-F. Deslandes, in *Féeries. Études sur le conte merveilleux XVIIe-XVIIIe siècle, 2 (Le conte oriental)* (Grenoble, 2004–2005), pp. 259–272; E. Pesci, "Materialismo, tradizioni filosofiche e gusto estetico nel *Pigmalion, ou la Statue animée* di A.-F. Deslandes", in A.-F. Deslandes, *Pigmalion, ou la Statue animée. L'optique des moeurs, opposée à l'optique des couleurs*, ed. E. Pesci (Milan, 2008), pp. 7–102; E. Mastrogiacomo, *Libertinismo e lumi. André-François Boureau-Deslandes (1689–1757)* (Naples 2009).

On the reception of Deslandes's *Histoire critique de la philosophie*: BF, XXV (1737), pp.189–218; XXVI (1738), pp. 38–65; BR, XVII (1736), p. 234; XX (1738), pp. 266–284; XXI (1738), pp. 171–194 (for the other journals see Geissler, *Boureau-Deslandes*, pp. 197–201); Brucker, I, p. 37; VI, p. 28; J. d'Alembert and D. Diderot (eds.), *Encyclopédie*, III (Paris, 1753), p. ix; J. G. Hamann, *Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten. Aesthetica in nuce* (Stuttgart, 1998), p. 19; J.-H.-S. Formey, *Histoire abrégée de la philosophie* (Amsterdam, 1760), pp. 19–26; Voltaire, *Correspondance*, ed. Th. Bestermann, XXXII (Geneva, 1958), n° 6800, p. 212; [G. Maleville], *Histoire critique de l'Éclectisme, ou des nouveaux Platoniciens* (no place, 1766), I, p. xvii; A. Sabatier de Castres, *Les trois siècles de la littérature françoise* [. . .] (Amsterdam, 1774[2]), II, pp. 54–55; A. Cromaziano [A. Buonafede], *Della istoria e della indole di ogni filosofia* (Venice, 1782), I, *Prefazione*, p. xxxi; Degérando, I, p. 133; Tennemann, p. 17. Cf. also J.-L. Carr, "Deslandes and the 'Encyclopédie' ", *French Studies*, XVI (1962), pp. 154–160; Proust, *Diderot et l'Encyclopédie*, pp. 240–242 and 255–257; D.W. Smith, "Helvétius's Library", *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, LXXIX (1971), pp. 153–161; Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica di A. Genovesi*, pp. 110–111; F. Piva, *Cultura francese e censura nella Venezia del secondo Settecento* (Venice, 1973), p. 151; S. Ricci, "Brucker e Deslandes. Nuovi documenti", GCFI, LX (1981), pp. 221–237; N. Cronk and C. Mervaud "Voltaire annotateur de Boureau-Deslandes: une anecdote relatée par Formey", in *Le corpus des notes marginales*, ed. J.-M. Moureaux (Paris, 2003), pp. 351–354.

On the criticism: DSPh, II, pp. 62–65; Vernière, *Spinoza et la pensée française*, pp. 334–340 and *passim*; C. G. Arsakanyan, "K voprosu o stanovlenii istorii filosofii kak nauki [On the formation of the history of philosophy as a science]", *Voprosy filosofii*, XVI (1962), n. 6, pp.105–106; Bréhier, *The History of Philosophy. The Hellenic Age*, "Introduction", pp. 16–17; Geissler, *Boureau-Deslandes*, pp. 38–59; Garin, "La storia 'critica' ", pp. 244–255; Rak, pp. 69–70; Braun, pp. 144–152; Macary, *Masque et Lumières*, pp. 189–221; G. Santinello, "La storia della storiografia filosofica", *Bollettino della Società filosofica italiana*, XC-XCI (1975), p. 12; G. Piaia, "Storia della filosofia e *histoire de l'esprit humain"*, pp. 210–220; Id., "Dal libertinismo erudito all'Illuminismo. L' *Histoire critique de la philosophie* di A.-F. Boureau-Deslandes", *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, CXCI (1980), pp. 595–601; Del Torre, pp. 103–137; R. Geissler, "Boureau-Deslandes historien de la philosophie", in *L'histoire au XVIIIe siècle.* Colloque d'Aix-en-Provence, 1[er], 2 et 3 Mai 1975 (La Calade, 1980), pp. 135–152; Gueroult, pp. 299–308; Azouvi, *Descartes et la France*, p. 109; H. Deneys, "Épicure et le système des atomes

dans *l'Histoire critique de la philosophie* d'A.-F. Deslandes", *Dix-huitième siècle*, XXXV (2003), pp. 29–54; J. I. Israel, "Philosophy, History of Philosophy, and *l'Histoire de l'esprit humain*", p. 336; P.F. Daled, *Le matérialisme occulté et la genèse du "sensualisme". Écrire l'histoire de la philosophie en France* (Paris, 2005), pp. 10–11; Mastrogiacomo, *Libertinismo e lumi*, pp. 143–246.

Chapter 4
The General Histories of Philosophy in Italy in the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Century

Gregorio Piaia

Introduction

"We must confess that in this *Synopsis Historiae philosophicae* the Author has accumulated with great industry, from innumerable books, those things which by their very variety can delight the reader, and with his labour has offered such a magnificent service to his fellow Italians, among whom the study of the history of Philosophy is seen to stagnate, that the hope arises in us that with his example he will stir many of his fellow citizens to cultivate this field" (AE, 1730, p. 221). With these words Heumann greeted the publication of the work by G.B. Capasso and simultaneously lamented the absence of a tradition of studies on the history of philosophy in Italy. An analogous comment was to be made in the second half of the eighteenth century by Father Appiano Buonafede (Agatopisto Cromaziano) in the preface to his history of philosophy, where he notes that "Italy is almost bereft of historians of philosophy. Luigi Pesaro, Leonardo Cozzando, Giambattista Capasso, Odoardo Corsini, and Antonio Genovesi have given us some essays on this subject, but they had no thought of writing an entire history, with the exception of Capasso" (*Della istoria e della indole d'ogni filosofia*, Venice, 1782 [1st ed.: 1766], I, pp. xxxvii–xxxviii). In reality, while it is true that the history of philosophy as it developed in Italy was not in the avant-garde of the formation of the genre, as was the case in other central and western European countries, it must be said that the Italian picture is broader, richer, and indeed more original than would appear from Heumann's summary judgement or the brief list given by Cromaziano. In the first place, as far as a theoretical awareness of the role of the finality of studies on the history of philosophy is concerned, we find ourselves facing two complex positions which are emblematic of the evolution in attitude which took place over the course of 30 years.

G. Piaia (✉)
Università di Padova, Dipartimento di Filosofia, Piazza Capitaniato 3, 35139 Padova, Italy
e-mail: gregorio.piaia@unipd.it

G. Piaia, G. Santinello (eds.), *Models of the History of Philosophy*, International Archives of the History of Ideas, Archives internationales d'histoire des idées,
DOI 10.1007/978-90-481-9507-7_4, © Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2011

The first position is expressed in Jacopo Facciolati's oration, *Ad philosophiam*, delivered in the Padua Seminary in 1716, whose programme transpires from the subtitle, *Nulla est adolescentibus tradenda Philosophia, nisi historica* ("No Philosophy save the historical is to be taught to young people"). In dealing with the problem of the teaching of philosophy, Facciolati complains of the inadequacy of the systematic method then in force, which took no account of the real abilities of the young people who studied it and which simply ended up as a source of prejudice, and he proposes as an alternative the historical method: "I certainly [. . .] have both asked others and reflected myself, why it was that although young people are kept at great length in the schools of Philosophy they nevertheless pick up nothing from them but a load of prejudices, tied to which almost by superstition, they are impeded from ever becoming philosophers; and when I carefully consider the weakness of their age, the nature of this science, and the common method of teaching, I finally come to the conclusion which I maintain and constantly defend, that no Philosophy, neither ancient or new, is to be taught to young people, save the historical. And when I say Historical Philosophy", the author explains, "I entirely exclude the study of dialectic disputation and I eliminate from young peoples' studies those great names, the Academics, the Peripatetics, and the followers of Democritus, whose doctrines they cannot master fully, nor indeed will they ever master if they apply themselves to them prematurely" (Jacobi Facciolati *Ad Philosophiam Oratio IV*, in Id., *De optimis studiis orationes X*, Padua: Typis Seminarii, 1723, 8vo, pp. 61–83 [63]).

Referring to the programme of studies, in which philosophy was a preparatory subject common to many fields, Facciolati points out the advisability of a basic historical knowledge covering all the ancient and modern philosophers: "If Aristotle and Plato above all are useful to Theologians, Pythagoras to Mathematicians, Socrates to Moralists, Solon and Lycurgus to Lawyers, and if those who philosophize more by experience than by contemplation are useful to Physicians, then young people are to be led to the works of all of these and to be instructed in the doctrines of them all, so that wherever they are led, either by necessity or choice or even by chance, they will be intellectually well equipped". Foreseeing objections, Facciolati believes that is it much more difficult to study the "complete thoughts" of one single philosopher "presented by means of ambages and never-ending controversies" than to commit to memory the opinions of all the philosophers, "condensed in a simple narration", and he goes on to express his intolerance of traditional scholastic teaching which revolves around the authority of Aristotle alone: "In order for us to attain the principal point of all Philosophy, is it not easier to apply oneself to the principles of nature, whatever they are, found in the variety of sects and handed down in letters, and to explain them without controversies, than to submit oneself totally to the authority of only one man, and to explain his sentences by means of innumerable questions [. . .]? I well remember how many not days but months, and with what tedium I sometimes turned the pages of those enormous volumes in which Aristotle's matter, form, and privation is disputed with such effort" (*Ad Philosophiam*, pp. 65–67). The function of the history of philosophy is not merely a didactic issue, since Facciolati stresses the usefulness of "philosophical erudition" for men of letters and poets, for those who aspire to the *elegantia vitae*

through the *bonae artes*, and for professional philosophers themselves. Nor should the number of ancient sects be a source of alarm, since the panorama of Greek philosophy is less complex: "The ancient institutions of philosophy, if they are numbered, are so many that if a man should live three times his years would hardly be sufficient to know them all; in reality, however, in part these have been lost, swallowed up by time, in part they contain similar doctrines, in such a way that Thomas Stanley has been able to collect them all in a single and not enormous volume" (*Ad Philosophiam*, p. 81).

The second position is held by Antonio Genovesi and denotes a profoundly different cultural climate: while Facciolati still speaks for the need to go beyond the scholastic tradition by adopting the historical method, and, although speaking of philosophers *veteres* and *recentes*, he refers above all to Greek philosophy, Genovesi looks beyond the Alps for his inspiration and his work already betrays the influence of the Enlightenment, where the *querelle* between ancients and moderns is left behind for good and the study of the past is theoretically justified thanks to a new historical awareness. Indeed the *Disputatio physico-Historica*, added in 1745 as a preface to a new edition of the Dutch Pieter van Musschenbroek's *Elementa Physicae*, which we will come back to later, opens by deploring the indifference and scorn with which modern scholars of physics and mathematics approach the theories of the ancient philosophers: "Those who today cultivate the study of Physics and Mathematics are thus born away by new geniuses and so refuse all commerce with antiquity that they do not really approve of anything that either they or these more recent Philosophers did not invent or improve: the endeavour of ancient minds they either neglect as if it were less useful or they despise as if it were child's play. Moreover, accomplished in the more serious disciplines, everything is seen to annoy them that does not have the flavour of the Geometer and the Arithmetician, so that as Plato once did, they do not allow anyone to be admitted to them unless he is covered in the dust of Geometry". Genovesi certainly does not mean to deny the contribution made by modern mathematicians to the development of philosophy, but this does not prevent him from considering a comparison with the past as profitable: "however, I am of the opinion that the history of philosophy of every age and every nation is extremely useful to the Philosopher, not simply for the purposes of ornament and pomp, but for those of knowledge, and that none of its geniuses are to be neglected by the lover of any science. Since our intellect is limited, and more heads, as the saying goes, are better than one, and what is more, in finding the most important things, not so much industry and zeal as nature itself and even chance contribute, certainly the greatest light will be brought to the Philosopher by a knowledge of the opinions of every age and every nation on nature, whilst an ignorance of these will make him not only unrefined and almost crude but also less learned. To this is to be added the fact that since all the disciplines did not fall from the sky fully and perfectly formed to the sons of Adam, but were found and developed gradually, it is without doubt worth knowing when, and by whom, and by what means and method they were first found and cultivated. For this reason I consider to be particularly worthy in the Republic of Letters those many men and learned scholars who have investigated the history of Philosophy" (Petrus Van Musschenbroek,

Elementa Physicae conscripta in usus academicos, quibus nunc primum in gratiam studiosae juventutis accedunt ubique auctaria quamplurima, frequentissimae adnotationes, Disputatio physico-Historica de rerum corporearum origine, ac demum de rebus caelestibus Tractatus, opera et studio Antonii Genuensis, Editio tertia Veneta ad novissimam Neapolitanam exacta, Venice: ex Typ. Remondiniana, 1761, 8°, I, p. 1). Moving on from these theoretical positions to actual historiographical practice, it must be noted in the first place that Capasso's *Historiae Philosophiae Synopsis* (1728), though it is in effect the first autonomous, systematic, and complete treatise to appear in Italy, does not represent the "beginning" of the Italian genre of the history of philosophy: it can be seen as more as marking the watershed between a series of general sketches or partial treatments, which developed with varying and at times even original purposes, and a work of a didactic nature, fully integrated into the "genre" (as it had developed in Holland and Germany), but devoid of any specific connotations. In reality the first examples of a historiography which was "Italian" in language and cultural orientation precedes Capasso's Latin work by nearly 60 years: it is Antonio Felice Marsili's academic discourse, *Delle Sette de' Filosofi e del Genio di Filosofare* (1671), which is characterized by an interpretation of the history of human thought in conformity with the principles of Galileo's experimental method. Closer to Dutch models of historiography, on the other hand, is the *De magisterio antiquorum philosophorum* (1684) by Father Leonardo Cozzando, an author who possessed both a training in scholasticism and an interest in the history of philosophy. Another history of ancient philosophy, shorter, and placed within the context of universal history, is outlined in the famous *Mappamondo istorico* by the Jesuit Antonio Foresti. In the section "Illustrious wise men, scholars, and artists of Greece", the "most celebrated Philosophers" are presented after the legislators in a series of twenty biographical profiles, preceded by an introduction on the seven Sages, the origin of the various schools, and dialectic. Foresti divides Greek philosophy into three "squadrons" on the basis of the tripartite division of philosophy into natural (Thales, Anaximander, Anaxagoras, and Archelaus), moral (Socrates and the schools which derived from him, including the Stoics and Epicureans), and dialectic (which found "approval" only with the Sophists); the Sceptics are quoted separately (A. Foresti, *Mappamondo istorico, cioè ordinata narrazione dei quattro sommi imperj del mondo* [. . .] *e della monarchia di Christo* [. . .] *con l'imprese più illustri dell'istoria antica e moderna*, Venice, 1695–1716, I, pp. 281–316).

In the period which goes from the end of the seventeenth century to the first three decades of the eighteenth, there is a particular attention to the history of philosophy, at various levels, in the Neapolitan cultural area: here, in concomitance with the legal and philosophical controversy which originated at the end of the century with the trial of the "atheists", Giuseppe Valletta, in his *Istoria filosofica* (1697–1704), adapts material inherited from the Renaissance and from English and Dutch culture to fulfil a precise controversial and apologetic function, inaugurating – against Scholasticism and in defence of the "freedom to philosophize" – a historiography of an ideological nature. This same approach is also characteristic of the work of Costantino Grimaldi, who planned to respond with a universal history of

philosophy to the *Lettere apologetiche in difesa della Teologia Scolastica e della Filosofia Peripatetica* (Naples, 1694) by the Jesuit Giovan Battista De Benedictis (*alias* Benedetto Aletino), the most relentless adversary of those Neapolitan intellectuals who followed the "new philosophy" of Gassendi and Descartes. It is the same Grimaldi who informs us, in an autobiographical memoir written in the third person, that, "he judged it opportune to take on a strenuous task which might serve to remove many prejudices which Father De Benedictis had sown: this was to undertake the compilation of the Universal History of Philosophy, which passing through each Nation, and particularly Greece, finally arrived at the Romans, and then moved south to the Arabs; and then he planned to explain how philosophy had descended to us from the Arabs, coming up to modern times, by narrating the systems of the ancient and modern philosophers, and noting how philosophy was in force in various peoples: and in this guise many of the arguments which De Benedictis adduced would be refuted". The urgency of providing a polemical reply induced Grimaldi, however, to suspend his compilation of such a work, which was probably inspired along the same lines as Valletta's *Istoria filosofica*, and to turn his attention to drafting three "Replies" to De Benedictis, which were published in the years 1699–1703 (C. Grimaldi, *Memorie di un anticurialista del Settecento*, ed. V.I. Comparato, Florence, 1964, pp. 11–14; on its relationship with Valletta's work – which followed the opposite course, that is, from controversy to the history of philosophy – see Comparato, *Giuseppe Valletta*, p. 226).

We have been unable to find any trace of this incomplete history of philosophy in Neapolitan libraries, but the history was nevertheless included by Mazzucchelli in his lengthy biographical profile, published a year after Grimaldi's death: after touching on the "conversations" which were held in Valletta's house, Mazzucchelli notes that, "being familiar with such illustrious subjects and having read the best works, Costantino [Grimaldi] began to outline the History of philosophy, beginning from the first ages of Adam up to our own age, but what the outcome of this work was we do not know with certainty" (Mazzucchelli, *Notizie storiche*, p. viii; on p. lxx this history of philosophy figures at the head of a list of Grimaldi's manuscript works). Some significant elements of Grimaldi's historical enterprise can however be gathered from the three "Replies", which were later enlarged and re-published under the title *Discussioni istoriche, teologiche e filosofiche* [...] *fatte per occasione della Risposta alle Lettere Apologetiche di Benedetto Aletino*, Lucca [but Naples] 1725, 3 Vols. (the successive, unpublished, Vols. IV–V, are conserved in Naples, Bib. Nat., mss XIII-D-114 and 115). At the beginning of volume I (§§ 26–75) Grimaldi outlines a history of medieval thought, which revolves around the distinction between a "good scholastic (or 'methodic') theology" and a "vulgar scholasticism" (*Discussioni*, I, p. 44: the author is inspired in particular by Mabillon's *Traité des études monastiques*). Volume V (§§ 463ff.) contains among other things what Comparato has defined as an "anti-Aristotelian essay on the history of philosophy", in which the works of Hornius and Vossius are also used, and which probably contains part of the material collected for the planned universal history of philosophy. Grimaldi includes a list of the errors committed by Aristotle and Scholasticism in the fields of physics and morality respectively, and he extols

the method used by Bacon and the Neapolitan and European scientific academies (*Discussioni*, V, §§ 569–696; cf. Comparato, "Ragione e fede nelle 'Discussioni istoriche, teologiche e filosofiche' di C. Grimaldi", p. 91).

This same Neapolitan environment resounds in various ways with echoes of the European debate on the most remote philosophies, which included the theme of a "most ancient wisdom of the Italians", widely-diffused in the southern Italian culture of the period. This debate is taken up again, for example, at the meetings of the *Accademia Medinacoeli* (1698–1702). In his *Ragionamento de' princìpi della filosofia e della teologia degli Assiri* (subsequently published together with a second *Ragionamento delle arti d'indovinare degli Assiri*, in *Miscellanea di varie operette*, VI, Venice, 1742, pp. 294–344), Giuseppe Lucina makes the Ionian and Italic schools depend on the intuitions of the Assyrians, who began astronomy, pagan theology, and corpuscular philosophy (the same as that found in Pythagoras and Democritus). For his part, Valletta claims, in the second of his three unpublished lessons on the Persian Empire, that "it is well known that Pythagoras and Democritus, one who brought physical sciences and the true way of philosophizing to Greece, and the other morality (which is the best and the true philosophy) to our Italy, or rather to our shores, had learned them from those wise men". Several years earlier, an adversary of the modern philosophers, Domenico Aulisio, had maintained in his *De numeris medicis dissertatio Pythagorica* (in Dominici Aulisii *Opuscula*, Naples, 1694) that Pythagorean philosophy was a synthesis of ancient thought, thus giving the thesis of a most ancient wisdom of the Italians (*antiquissima Italorum sapientia*) "one of its most precise formulations before Vico" (Ricuperati, *L'esperienza civile*, pp. 10–20 and 51–52). We reach a full acceptance of this thesis as the foundation of a general history of philosophy (understood not as a subject in its own right, but as part of a more comprehensive history of Italian culture) with the work of Father Giacinto Gimma, a native of Bari, from whose *Idea della storia dell'Italia letterata* (1723) it is possible to extract a complete history of "Italian" philosophy, from the most remote and fantastic origins to the most recent developments of "experimental philosophy". Besides this "nationalistic" reconstruction of the entire historical course of human thought, Gimma's work is characterized by the co-existence of themes (such as the defence of Scholasticism and the affirmation of the "freedom to philosophize") which had been placed in contrasting positions in the previous *istorie* by Valletta and Grimaldi. Twenty years later, even Tafuri refers to the tradition of Italian philosophy, and the first volume of his history of Neapolitan writers is largely devoted to the Pythagoreans and the other ancient philosophers of Southern Italy. Tafuri shows himself to be up to date with the modern literature on the history of philosophy, since he cites Stanley and Capasso on several occasions, as well as Ménage, Jonsius, and Vossius (*Istoria degli scrittori nati nel Regno di Napoli, scritta da* Gio: Bernardino Tafuri da Nardò, *Tomo I. In cui con ordine alfabetico si dà succinta notizia della persona, e delle opere di quelli Scrittori, che fiorirono nel Regno prima di Gesù Cristo*, Naples: printed by F. C. Mosca, 1744, 16°: pp. 33–48 contain a general profile, followed by a consideration author by author; concerning the birthplace of Pythagoras, Tafuri recognizes, after touching with interest on the "Calabrian" hypothesis – also

mentioned by Valletta and Gimma – that the "most accurate and diligent scholars, ancient and modern, call him a native of the island of Samos" [pp. 53–54]).

The theme of the origins of philosophy and its primitive development is tackled in the lengthy and muddled *Philosophia Adamitico-Noetica divina mundana et eadem ad omnes gentes profecta, in septem libris exposita* by the Calabrian friar Antonio Costantino, which was never printed (Vienna, Oesterreichische Nationalbibliothek, mss. 10408–10413). Written in Vienna (where Costantino was imperial court poet) around 1730, the work takes up again some of the typical themes of seventeenth-century erudition and draws particularly on Samuel Bochart and Huet: God entrusted Adam with a "divine and worldly philosophy", which remained intact up to the time of Noah and which was then transmitted to the Orientals; Moses derived his doctrine from the Egyptians and held an atomistic theory of physics like all the most ancient philosophers, from Pythagoras to Thales, up until Plato; Pythagoras, Empedocles, and Parmenides were witnesses of Adamitic-Noachic philosophy, but with Plato the Pythagorean tradition became corrupt and obscure . . . (G. Ricuperati, *Alle origini del "Triregno*", pp. 604–610, see also pp. 623–638, which contain an unpublished critical review by Pietro Giannone of Book VI of the *Philosophia Adamitico-Noetica*, devoted to the peoples which descended from Japheth).

1728 is a key date in early eighteenth-century Italian history of philosophy, since it is the year which saw the publication of the first works by Capasso and Ginanni which mark the transition of philosophical historiography to the status of a literary genre in its own right in Italy too, in line with the models from beyond the Alps. Besides these, in which the systematic approach leaves no room for any originality of interpretation, it is also worth noting Doria's short but substantial history of philosophy, of a decidedly speculative nature, contained in the introduction to his *Filosofia*, where "the Author gives an idea of all the various Philosophies of the Ancients and the Moderns, and then of that held by himself" (*Filosofia di Paolo-Mattia Doria, con la quale si schiarisce quella di Platone*, Amsterdam [but Geneva: de Tournes], 1728, 4°, I, *Introduzione*, pp. 1–90; the history of philosophy is treated on pp. 14–67; the text is devoid of any systematic division and is of a discursive nature). A typical example of the "return journey undertaken by Italian thought from Cartesianism to the Platonism of the Renaissance tradition" (Garin, p. 895), Doria bases his historical sketch on the opposition between the "ancient methodological Philosophers", followers of "good logic" (that is Pythagoras, and "before him Pherecydis of Syros, the Egyptians, and the Brachmans of the East Indies, and after all these Plato, who, in my opinion, was more a commentator of Pythagoras than an Author with his own system") and the "infinite Sects of Philosophers [in particular the Epicureans, Sceptics, Stoics, and Sophists] who rose up against them", aiming to destroy or to "spoil" that religion which the others had built up on the basis of "natural light" (*Filosofia*, p. 14). With the advent of Christianity, the "immense light of Holy Revelation" rendered Pythagorean-Platonic philosophy initially useless, but after Constantine it was necessary "for Christians to come to grips again with that Philosophy deduced from natural light, which administering us with knowledge of human virtues, administers us furthermore with the means of ruling and of governing the Republic" (*Filosofia*, pp. 39–40). The author also touches on the rediscovery

of Aristotle by the Arabs and his transmission to the West. The rebirth of Platonic philosophy in the fifteenth century was short-lived, since the obscurity of the commentators (Ficinus in particular) led to "treating Plato like an enlightened Poet, and not a Philosopher, since, just as Poets do, he explained the truths that Philosophy teaches by means of the light of inspiration and through images, and not with demonstrative reason. Now this second fall of Platonic Philosophy is that which has opened up a large field of study to modern men of letters, lovers of easy and light study, to produce an innumerable number of false and pernicious Systems of Philosophy" (*Filosofia*, p. 45).

On the basis of these premisses, Doria gives a critical account of the doctrines of Gassendi, Descartes, and Spinoza ("the most pernicious Author" to have come out of the Cartesian school, who "abusing Geometry pretended [. . .] to construct a geometrically demonstrated Metaphysics, and instead of which he created a Hypothetical Metaphysics": *Filosofia*, p. 52; see also pp. 26 and 54, where there is a criticism of those who, "ignorant of Plato's doctrine", link him to Spinoza). Very soon, however, notes the author, Cartesianism was set aside, "because it is an inviolable law of nature that everything that is false is short-lived". The merit for "shaking off the yoke of René's tyranny" goes to Newton, whose experimental orientation is presented in terms analogous to those used at the same time by Capasso (see below, para 4.5.4.3.). Doria is quick, however, to put us on our guard "against carrying this maxim of sensible experience as far as Metaphysics", aiming his criticism at the *Essay* by Locke, "who in his Philosophy is semi-Sceptic, semi-Aristotelian, and semi-Epicurean, and in some places falls into Platonism without realising it. And in the very end, he has no System" (*Filosofia*, p. 57). Doria's work was reviewed in the *Bibliothèque Italique*, V, 1729, pp. 190–202, where a reply was made to the remarks against Descartes and Locke contained in what the reviewer defines as a "critical history of the principal Sects of Philosophy". Doria's other works are also interesting from the point of view of the history of philosophy: see for example, the third of his *Discorsi critici filosofici intorno alla Filosofia degl'Antichi e de i Moderni* (Venice, 1724), which contains an investigation into "the reasons for the decline of Philosophy after the fall of the Greeks and the Romans", and a synthesis of "the history of the origin and the progress of studies" from the fall of the Roman empire up to modern philosophy (pp. 145–162); cf. also the lengthy discussion of the work by Lévesque de Burigny contained in the *Difesa* [see above, Chapter 2, para 2.5.5]).

We mentioned earlier, together with Capasso, the Benedictine Pietro Paolo Ginanni (1698–1774), a learned scholar and native of Ravenna, who corresponded with Muratori. His first printed work, fruit of his teaching of the *placita philosophiae* in the monastery of S. Vitale in Ravenna, is a general history of philosophy, presented under the somewhat anodyne title: *Theses ex universa philosophia sub faustissimis auspiciis E.mi, ac Rev.mi Principis D. Angeli M. Quirini Patritii Veneti S. R. E. Cardin. Amplissimi Brixiae Episcopi ex Abbate Casinensi, publice propugnandae* a D. Cypriano Veneto Monacho Casinensi, P. D. Petri Pauli Ginanni a Ravenna Philosophiae, ac Geometriae Professoris Auditore (Ravenna: ex. Typ. Ant. Mariae Landi, 1728), folio, 64 pp. + *Epistola nuncupatoria*. We have been

unable to find a copy of this work, whose contents nevertheless are clearly indicated by a contemporary bibliographer, and they lead us to believe that Ginanni was inspired, just as much as Capasso, by the model of *historia philosophica*: "On the basis of its title, this work could be thought to be similar to the usual treatment of this argument, but the things contained within it go far beyond the usual aims of Philosophical theses and wander most freely through the widest fields of the whole history of philosophy. Here indeed the origin of Philosophy from the very beginning of the world, and its progress up until this period is briefly narrated; all the sects of philosophers are described succinctly; the years in which they flowered or died are indicated both for the period from the beginning of the world to the Julian dynasty and then from the coming of Christ onwards, with an indication of the authors who speak of these arguments. The most well-known sayings of the Philosophers, both ancient and more recent, are given; and whatever up to now each one has described in Physics, Astronomy, Geography, and Anatomy, is narrated in such a way that these theses could rightly be called a presentation and a synopsis of all philosophy, ancient as well as modern, and for this reason be greatly praised by all who read them" (M. Armellini, *Bibliotheca Benedictino-Casinensis sive Scriptorum Casinensis Congregationis alias S. Justinae Patavinae*, Pars prima, Assisi, 1731, II, pp. 131–132).

With Capasso and Ginanni's "synopses", the genre of the history of philosophy enters, we have said, a purely didactic sphere, and abandons any attempt to intervene in the debate over ancient and modern philosophy, as had been the case with Marsili, Valletta, Grimaldi, or Doria. In the years following 1728, the panorama is modest, since there are no huge, autonomous treatises like Capasso's, but merely short introductory outlines, designed to satisfy the demands of the textbook of systematic philosophy: such are the *Prefatio* and the *Synopsis* which precede Odoardo Corsini's *Institutiones philosophicae* (1731). Historical introductions to textbooks on a single "part" of philosophy, such as physics, have an even more limited scope. In this field it is interesting to note the transition from a discussion which mixes historical and theoretical elements (like that produced by Pace in the first treatise on physics in Italian, based on the method of the *placita* and on the division of philosphy into four schools)[1] to a historical introduction as distinct from a systematic treatment, as is the case with the *Elementi di Fisica* by father Giovanni Crivelli (Venice: printed by Stefano Orlandini, 1731 [1744^2], 2 vols). The first volume of this work opens with a *Prefazione storico-fisica* (pp. 1–17), which provides "a brief note on the Philosophers who in this subject became most famous, both for their systems and for the number of their followers", and which is divided into four chapters: "On the Ionian sect", "On the Italic sect", "On the state of physics among the

[1] *La Fisica de' Peripatetici, Cartesiani et Atomisti, al paragone della vera Fisica d'Aristotele*, del Molto Rev. Padre Stefano Pace del terz'ordine di S. Francesco (Venice: L. Baseggio, 1718), I, fol. ar , in which the author states that his intention is "to give succinct information on the most celebrated and famous schools, which are the Peripatetic, the Cartesian, the Atomist or Gassendian, and I will add the fourth, which I believe to be the true Aristotelian, confuting the reasons or the hypotheses sometimes of one and sometimes the other ".

Romans" (which also mentions the Fathers of the Church), and "From the Arabs up to our present time".

Analogous in its title, but far more substantial from the point of view of its content is Genovesi's *Disputatio physico-historica de rerum corporearum origine*, quoted above (in Musschenbroek, *Elementa Physicae*, I, pp. 1–69; but now see the modern edition with an Italian translation: A. Genovesi, *Dissertatio physico-historica de rerum corporearum origine et constitutione,* ed. S. Boneschi and M. Torrini, Florence, 2001), which has already been analyzed by Garin in the context of the history of science. After a theoretical preface, the *Disputatio* is divided into three chapters, subdivided into paragraphs: the first concerns the *sententia* of the pre-Greek philosophers on the origin of the world; the second is on the *physiologia Graecanica*, presented sect by sect; and the third deals with the *physiologia Recentiorum*, which (after a brief reference to "the most miserable state of letters and the restoration of the same") is divided into nations: the Italians, Descartes ("coryphaeus of French philosophers"), the English, and the Germans. Genovesi shows himself to be well acquainted with the literature on the history of philosophy (in his youth he had read Capasso's *Synopsis* with enthusiasm) and he quotes among others Stanley, Burnet and Cudworth, Gravius, Thomasius, the works of Buddeus, Brucker's *Historia de Ideis* and *Historia critica*, Deslandes, and numerous articles from Bayles' *Dictionnaire*, as well as Heumann's *Acta philosophorum*. Genovesi is particularly aware of the need for a historical introduction to the philosophical disciplines: his own text book on logic, although dating to 1745, is preceded by an *Artis Logicae Historia* which goes up to Christian Wolff and which is explicitly linked to the analogous work by Walch, whose thesis of an "Adamitic logic" he criticizes (A. Genuensis *Elementorum artis logico-criticae libri V*, Editio altera (Venice: Th. Bettinelli, 1752), 8°, pp. 4–20). Genovesi's writings take us by now into a period influenced by Brucker's *Historia critica*; in the same year, 1745, Antonio Conti told Cerati of his intention, formed after a careful reading of Brucker's work, to write a "Critical History of Modern Philosophy" as it had developed in Italy, France, England, and Germany, since "Brucker touches little or not at all on the principles and the progress of this Philosophy, and how little by little it gained a foothold in Europe" (A. Conti, *Prose e poesie* (Venice, 1756), II, p. 81; Conti had a long-standing interest in the origins of modern philosophy and the Italian contribution to it: cf. the initial section of his *Lettera* to the bishop of Adria, Filippo Del Torre, regarding the *Considerazioni intorno alla generazione de' viventi* by Francesco Maria Nigrisoli, which appeared in GLI, XII, 1712, pp. 240–330).

In this overall context the two greatest figures of early eighteenth-century Italian culture, Vico and Muratori, occupy a merely marginal place, even though the relations that these two "greats" had with the writers, themes, and methods of philosophical historiography are numerous. In the case of Vico, for example, we may recall in particular his links with Valletta and above all with Doria, to whom he dedicated his *De antiquissima Italorum sapientia* which develops, as we have seen, a theme which is also present in the Neapolitan tradition of the history of philosophy. But the author of *Scienza Nuova* was to make a fundamental contribution precisely to the overcoming of this theme, by pointing out the lack of evidence at

the basis of this "ancient theology" and by casting doubt on the mythical journeys of Pythagoras and the alleged "matchless wisdom of the ancients", such as Anacharsis and Zoroaster, Trismegistus and Orpheus, whose "oracles of soothsayers, [. . .] by the vanity of the learned, were turned into oracles of philosophers" (*The First New Science* of G.B. Vico [1725], § 37, trans. by L. Pompa (Cambridge, 2002), p. 28; *The New Science* of G.B. Vico [1744], §§ 59, 100, 127–128, trans. by Th.G. Bergin and M.H. Fisch (Ithaca, N.Y., 1948), pp. 33–34, 46, 55). In such a way Vico challenged (as Bayle had done by other means) the Renaissance interpretation of Plato which had widely influenced the philosophical historiography of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. By substituting the archetypes of a most ancient wisdom with a historical vision of the human world based on a triadic framework, in which the idea of a pre-logical and hence a pre-philosophical spiritual activity, typical of the most ancient peoples, is put forward for the first time, Vico prepared the way for a revision of the concept of barbarian "philosophy" and its relations with Greek philosophy.

In any case, Vico's "historicism", with its providentialistic vision and its need to identify the great laws and the great phases in the development of humanity, made it possible to conceive of a history of philosophy no longer viewed as an extrinsic sequence of "nations", "sects", and "lives", but as a succession of periods, each one with its own specific "spirit", in which moments of progress in the human genius alternate with moments of regress and *ricorsi*. This potentiality – which in Vico and his contemporaries remained in a purely virtual state, however – has been clearly perceived and expressed by Gueroult. After reminding us of the interest that the young Vico had for Huet, whom he identified with erudite anti-Cartesianism and an adherence to the party of the "ancients", Gueroult observes that Vico does not share Huet's skeptical orientation: he "replaces abstract reason with common sense, the true with certain, and his certainty, of a practical nature, is enough to confound Pyrrhonism. His anti-Cartesianism, the negative aspect of his thought, leads to a positive aspect, which is the establishment of a philosophy of history in which the metaphysical vision inherited from Plato is united with an investigation of a positive spirit into the ideal laws of history. Though this new philosophy of history, rich in suggestions, does not directly concern the history of philosophy, it is still highly important for it indirectly by preparing the successive philosophies of history, which expressely integrate the history of philosophy into their systems" (Gueroult, pp. 226 and 231).

Besides the impact on the history of philosophy of these large fundamental themes of "a science that is both a history and philosophy of humanity" (*The First New Science*, § 23, p. 18), Vico's work also includes a number of theses specifically regarding the history of philosophy. It is enough to consider the theme, expressed several times, of the late birth of philosophy and of its derivation from religion and law, or the parallel between the Athenian democracy and the development of philosophy: "Now, because laws certainly came first and philosophies later, it must have been from observing that the enactment of laws by the Athenian citizens involved their coming to agreement in an idea of an equal utility common to all of them severally, that Socrates began to adumbrate intelligible genera or abstract universals by induction [. . .]. Plato, reflecting that in such public assemblies the minds of

particular men, each passionately bent on his private utility, are brought together in a dispassionate idea of common utility [. . .], raised himself to the meditation of the highest intelligible ideas of created minds, [. . .] and thus he reached the height of conceiving the philosophical hero who commands his passions at will. The way was thus prepared for the divine definition which Aristotle later gave us of a good law as a will free of passion, which is to say the will of a hero. He understood justice as queen of the virtues [. . .]. For he had observed legal justice seated in the spirit of the sovereign civil power and dictating prudence in the senate, fortitude in the armies and temperance at festivals [. . .]. From all the above we conclude that these principles of metaphysics, logic and morals issued from the market place of Athens. From Solon's advice to the Athenians, 'Know thyself' [. . .], came forth the popular commonwealths, from the popular commonwealths the laws, and from the laws emerged philosophy; and Solon, who had been wise in vulgar wisdom, came to be held wise in esoteric wisdom. This may serve *as a fragment of the history of philosophy told philosophically*, and a last reproof, of the many brought forth in this work, against Polybius who said that if there were philosophers in the world there would be no need of religions. For [the fact is that] if there had not been religions and hence commonwealths, there would have been no philosophers in the world [. . .]" (*The New Science* of G.B. Vico [1744], §§ 1040–1043, pp. 351–352; italics ours).

This theme is taken up again in the "Conclusion of the Work", where the "popular states" are connected with the rise of philosophy and eloquence; such a parallel is extended to the process of decline, so that the degeneration of the "popular states" is accompanied by that of the philosophies ("They descended to skepticism. Learned fools fell to calumniating the truth") and eloquence, fallen to "false eloquence, ready to uphold either of the opposed sides of a case indifferently" (*The New Science*, 1744 ed., §§ 1101–1102, pp. 379–380; on scepticism see also §§ 1363–1364, corresponding to ch. 2 of section XI of book IV, later suppressed in the definitive edition, which identifies a process of "corruption" from Socrates and Plato to Carneades, Arcesilaus, and Pyrrho). Vico sketches other outlines of a "progressive" history of Greek philosophy in conformity with the development of cognitive and logical abilities: questioning, on the basis of the "certain history of philosophers and the poets", the "recondite wisdom" and the "art of poetry" attributed to Homer, he notes that "For the first to arise were the very crude philosophers, who posited, as the principles of things, the bodies formed by the secondary qualities, called 'elements' in the vulgar. These were the physicists, the prince of whom was Thales the Milesian, one of the seven sages of Greece. They were followed by Socrates' master, Anaxagoras, who posited insensible bodies, the seeds of matter of every kind and form, as the force within all mechanisms. Next came Democritus, who posited bodies with the single primary quality of shape. Finally Plato sought the principles of things in the abstract principles of metaphysics, for which he posited an ideal [first] principle" (*The First New Science*, §§ 296–297, p. 174; see also *The New Science* [1744], § 499).

As far as Muratori is concerned, his insistence on methodological rigour also found an application to the history of philosophy, as is shown by his

remarks on Valletta's interpretative exaggerations and his criticism of Huet's *Traité philosophique*, both as a history of philosophy and for its theoretical content. It is precisely in the final chapters of his confutation of Huet's work (which remained unpublished at the time and which were published in recent times by Bertelli) that Muratori repeatedly stresses the need for a "good use of the mind", and although his remarks do not directly refer to the history of philosophy, they nevertheless reveal a singular affinity with the theoretical positions maintained, for example, by Heumann: "Little does it cost them to amass as much erudition as they can relating to that subject, and this is enough for them because their heads, little able to philosophize on things, can give no more. But erudition, if it is not accompanied by judgement, that is by critical speculation, which well knows how to combine different sources and recognize which have force, which adapt themselves, and which are not needed, and what can be deduced with certainty from the opinions of others, which are all regularly in need of examination, and cannot be taken as valued currency: erudition, I say, in such a case does not show anything other than the fact that the writer has read at length, and much little else; she has an enormous number of feathers, none of which is perhaps her own" (L.A. Muratori, *Delle forze dell'intendimento umano, o sia il pirronismo confutato*, Chapter XXVI, in S. Bertelli, *Erudizione e storia*, p. 514). These considerations take up themes already developed at length in the *Riflessioni sopra il buon gusto* (1708–1715): criticism of the use of memory as a mere tool of erudition, a condemnation of the sectarian and authoritarian spirit, and the need to unite erudition and criticism, erudition and philosophy (the latter understood as a philological verification of what is fact, and not, as Vico had defined it, "making the certain true"[*inveramento del certo*]) (L.A. Muratori, *Dalle "Riflessioni sopra il buon gusto nelle scienze e nelle arti*", I, 8; II, 3, 4, in *Opere*, ed. G. Falco and F. Forti, Milan-Naples, 1964, I, pp. 245–246 and 256–261).

Such insights could have functioned as the impetus for a new development in the genre of the history of philosophy, just as Bayle's "critical" lesson bore fruit with the work of Deslandes in France. But neither Muratori's methodological reflections nor Vico's speculative positions had any immediate or substantial impact on Italian philosophical historiography, even though there are some significant moments, such as Genovesi's references to "our Vico" with regard to the "conceit of nations", which trace their origins back to mythical characters, and the "conceit of scholars" who, "when they seek the origin of some Art, make it begin from Adam" (Genovesi, *Disputatio*, p. 6n; *Elementorum artis logico-criticae*, p. 5, where a reference is made to the "Adamitic logic" of Johann Georg Walch; cf. also Garin, *A. Genovesi*, p. 236, where the last chapter of the *Disputatio* is defined as "very close to Vico" because of its idea of an alternation of light and shadows, of "corsi" and "ricorsi"). In any case, the success of Brucker's *Historia critica* on a European scale lessened the chances of an autonomous development of philosophical historiography along "Italian" lines, a fact demonstratede by Buonafede's *Istoria*: inspired by Brucker, its originality if any lies in its recourse to a Roman Catholic tradition in opposition to certain positions which were typical of German historiography of a Lutheran tendency.

Bibliographical Note

For an overall view: R. Bobba, *Saggio intorno ad alcuni filosofi italiani meno noti prima e dopo la pretesa riforma cartesiana* (Benevento, 1868); G. Maugain, *Étude sur l'évolution intellectuelle de l'Italie de 1657 à 1750 environ* (Paris, 1909); Garin, pp. 838–1015; G. Getto, *Storia delle storie letterarie* (Florence, 1981[4]); V. Titone, *La storiografia dell'illuminismo in Italia* (Milan, 1969); F. Venturi, *Settecento riformatore. Da Muratori a Beccaria* (Turin, 1969); F.B. Crucitti Ullrich, *La "Bibliothèque Italique". Cultura "italianisante" e giornalismo letterario* (Milan-Naples, 1974); G. Ricuperati, "Giornali e società nell'Italia dell'Ancien Régime' (1668–1789)", in V. Castronovo – G. Ricuperati – C. Capra, *La stampa italiana dal Cinquecento all'Ottocento* (Bari, 1976), pp. 67–372; M. Torrini, *Dopo Galileo. Una polemica scientifica (1684–1711)* (Florence, 1979); *Cattolicesimo e lumi nel Settecento italiano*, ed. M. Rosa (Rome, 1981); V. Ferrone, *Scienza natura religione. Mondo newtoniano e cultura italiana nel primo Settecento* (Naples, 1982); J.-M. Gardair, *Le "Giornale de' letterati" de Rome (1668–1681)* (Florence, 1984); C. Manzoni, *I cartesiani italiani, 1660–1760* (Udine, 1984); Id., *Il "cattolicesimo illuminato" in Italia tra cartesianismo, leibnizismo e newtonismo-lockismo nel primo Settecento (1700–1750)* (Trieste, 1992); F. Waquet, *Le modèle français et l'Italie savante. Conscience de soi et perception de l'autre dans la République des Lettres (1660–1750)* (Rome, 1989); GCFI, LXXV (1996), n. 3 (monograph issue on the Cartesians in Italy); P. Casini, *L'antica sapienza italica. Cronistoria di un mito* (Bologna, 1998); *Naples, Rome, Florence. Une histoire comparée des intellectuels italiens (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècle)*, eds. J. Boutier, B. Marin and A. Romano (Rome, 2005). On Neapolitan culture: S. Mastellone, *Pensiero politico e vita culturale a Napoli nella seconda metà del Seicento* (Messina-Florence, 1965); G. Ricuperati, *L'esperienza civile e religiosa di P. Giannone* (Milan-Naples, 1970), Chapter 1; S. Suppa, *L'Accademia di Medinacoeli. Fra tradizione investigante e nuova scienza civile* (Naples, 1970); P. Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica di A. Genovesi* (Naples, 1972); R. Ajello, "Cartesianismo e cultura oltremontana al tempo dell'Istoria civile' ", in *Pietro Giannone e il suo tempo. Atti del Convegno di studi* (Naples, 1980), pp. 3–181; R. Colapietra, *L'amabile fierezza di Francesco D'Andrea* (Varese, 1981); *Galileo e Napoli*. Atti del Convegno (Naples, 1987); G. Belgioioso, *Cultura a Napoli e cartesianismo. Scritti su G. Gimma, P.M. Doria, C. Cominale* (Galatina, 1992); G. De Martino, *L'Illuminismo meridionale. La tradizione filosofica del Regno di Napoli tra '600 e '700* (Naples, 1995); C. Cantillo, *Filosofia, poesia e vita civile in Gregorio Messere. Un contributo alla storia del pensiero meridionale tra '600 e '700* (Naples, 1996); H.S. Stone, *Vico's Cultural History. The Production and Transmission of Ideas in Naples, 1685–1750* (Leiden – New York – Köln, 1997); G. Belgioioso, *La variata immagine di Descartes. Gli itinerari della metafisica tra Parigi e Napoli (1690–1733)* (Lecce, 1999); *Lezioni dell'Accademia di Palazzo del Duca di Medinacoeli (Napoli, 1698–1701)*, t. I and III, ed. M. Rak (Naples, 2000); E. Lojacono, *Immagini di René Descartes nella cultura napoletana dal 1644 al 1755* (Lecce, 2003); J. Robertson, *The Case of the Enlightenment: Scotland and Naples, 1680–1760* (Cambridge, 1995).

On the historiography of philosophy: G. Natali, *Il Settecento* (Milan, 1929 [1964[6]], pp. 192, 371–372, 451; C. Motzo Dentice d'Accadia, "Intorno alla storia della filosofia in Italia nel Settecento", *Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e filosofia della r. Università di Cagliari*, III (1930–1931), pp. 87–109; Garin, pp. 999–1000; Id., "G. Valletta storico della filosofia" and "A. Genovesi storico della scienza", in Id., *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo. Studi e ricerche* (Pisa, 1970 [Florence, 1993]), pp. 207–222 and 223–240; Braun, p. 202; I. Tolomio, *I fasti della ragione. Itinerari della storiografia filosofica nell'Illuminismo italiano* (Padua, 1990); Id., *Italorum sapientia. L'idea di esperienza nella storiografia filosofica italiana dell'età moderna* (Soveria Mannelli, 1999); G. Belgioioso, "I 'Filosofi pezzenti' e gli *Honnêtes hommes*. Immagini di Socrate nella cultura italiana del Seicento", in *Socrate in Occidente*, ed. E. Lojacono (Florence, 2004), pp. 147–172.

On Facciolati: Bobba, *Saggio*, pp. 287–339; Garin, pp. 999–1000 (see also the reviews of the *Oratio ad philosophiam*. in GLI, XXVII, 1716, pp. 457–459; AE, 1725, p. 281). On Foresti: Sommervogel, III, col. 879ff.. On Grimaldi: G. M. Mazzucchelli, "Notizie storiche e critiche intorno a C. Grimaldi", in [A. Calogerà], *Raccolta d'opuscoli scientifici e filologici*, XLV (Venice, 1751), pp. i–lxxi; Garin, pp. 874–876; V.I. Comparato, "Ragione e fede nelle 'Discussioni istoriche, teologiche e filosofiche' di C. Grimaldi", in *Saggi e ricerche sul Settecento* (Napoli, 1968), pp. 48–93. On De Benedictis: G. De Liguori, "Nota su Benedetto Aletino e le polemiche anticartesiane a Napoli nella seconda metà del secolo XVII", *Rivista di storia della filosofia*, XL (1985), pp. 271–283; Id., "La reazione a Cartesio nella Napoli del Seicento. Giovambattista De Benedictis", GCFI, LXXV (1996), pp. 330–359. On Costantino: G. Ricuperati, "Alle origini del 'Triregno': la 'Philosophia Adamitico-Noetica' di A. Costantino", *Rivista storica italiana*, LXXVII (1965), pp. 602–638. On Doria: MT, 1732, pp. 657–685; Garin, pp. 889–895; P. Zambelli, "Il rogo postumo di P.M. Doria", in *Ricerche sulla cultura dell'Italia moderna* (Bari, 1973), pp. 149–197; V. Conti, *P.M. Doria. Dalla repubblica dei togati alla repubblica dei notabili* (Florence, 1978); E. Nuzzo, *Verso la "Vita civile": antropologia e politica nelle lezioni accademiche di Gregorio Caloprese e P.M. Doria* (Naples, 1984); V. Ferrone, "Seneca e Cristo: la 'Respublica Christiana' di P.M. Doria", *Rivista storica italiana*, XCVI (1984), pp. 5–68; *P.M. Doria fra rinnovamento e tradizione*. Atti del Convegno di studi, Lecce, 4–6 novembre 1982 (Galatina, 1985). On Ginanni: *Biografia degli Italiani illustri*, III (Venice, 1836), pp. 233–235; DBI, LV (2000), pp. 8–9. On Crivelli: BI XII (1732), pp. 160–166. On Genovesi see the works by Garin and Zambelli quoted above; see also: M.T. Marcialis, *Genovesi tra Wolff e Locke. Metafisica ed empirismo nella "Ontosophia" genovesiana* (Cagliari, 1984); Ead., "Genovesi e Cartesio", GCFI, LXXV (1996), pp. 455–475; Ead., "Scienza e filosofia nella 'Dissertatio physico-historica de rerum origine' di Antonio Genovesi", *Rivista di storia della filosofia*, LVII (2002), pp. 601–612; E. Garin, "A. Genovesi metafisico e storico"; in Id., *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo*, pp. 246–264. On Conti: G. Piaia, "L'autocommento nei sonetti filosofici di Antonio Conti", in *L'autocommento*, ed. G.F. Peron (Padova, 1994), pp. 81–91; Id., "L'abate Conti e la storiografia filosofica del primo Settecento", in *La Repubblica delle Lettere e il Settecento italiano*, ed. C. Griggio et al. (forthcoming).

It is impossible here to touch on the enormous bibliography on Vico; it is enough to mention: R. Caponigri, *Time and Idea. The Theory of History in G.B. Vico* (London, 1953); N. Badaloni, *Introduzione a G. B. Vico* (Milan, 1961; Rome-Bari, 1994[4]); E. Garin, "Vico e l'eredità del pensiero del Rinascimento", in Id., *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo*, pp. 73–106; I.M. Battarano, "Vico e Morhof: considerazioni e congetture", *Bollettino del Centro di studi vichiani*, IX (1979), pp. 89–110; M. Agrimi, "Vico e la tradizione 'platonica'. 'La Filosofia dell'Umanità e la storia universale delle nazioni' ", *Bollettino del Centro di studi vichiani*, XXII–XXIII (1992–1993), pp. 65–102; J.M. Levine, "Giambattista Vico and the Quarrel between the Ancients and the Moderns", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, LII (1991), pp. 55–79; A. Pons, "Vico between the Ancients and the Moderns", *New Vico Studies*, XI (1993), pp. 13–23; A. Battistini, " 'Un angoletto morto della storia?'. Vico e la cultura europea tra Sei e Settecento", *Lettere italiane*, XLVII (1995), pp. 549–564; Paolo Rossi, *Le sterminate antichità e nuovi saggi vichiani* (Florence, 1999); P. Cristofolini, *Vico pagano e barbaro* (Pisa, 2001); E. Nuzzo, "La 'critica di severa ragione'. Vico e l''ermeneutica' dei tempi favolosi attorno al primo '700", in Id., *Tra ordine della storia e storicità. Saggi sui saperi della storia in Vico* (Rome, 2001), pp. 57–108; *Studi sul "De antiquissima Italorum sapientia" di Vico*, ed. G. Matteucci (Macerata, 2002) (in particolar the article by R. Mazzola, "Il 'De antiquissima' nella storiografia filosofica italiana dell'Ottocento"). On Muratori: P.G. Nonis, "L.A. Muratori e il pensiero medioevale", *Aevum*, XXXIII (1959), pp. 293–322; S. Bertelli, *Erudizione e storia in L. A. Muratori* (Naples, 1970); *Atti del Convegno intern. di studi muratoriani* (Florence, 1975), Vols. 3 (*L.A. Muratori e la cultura contemporanea*; *L.A. Muratori storiografo*; *La fortuna di L.A. Muratori*); E. Raimondi, *I lumi dell'erudizione. Saggi sul Settecento italiano* (Milan, 1989), pp. 79–124; *Per formare un'istoria intiera. Atti della I Giornata di studi muratoriani* (Firenze, 1992); G. De Martino, *Muratori filosofo. Ragione filosofica e coscienza storica in L.A. Muratori* (Naples, 1996); *Il soggetto e la storia. Atti della II Giornata di studi muratoriani* (Florence, 1996); P. Galetti, "Riflessioni storiografiche. Rileggendo L.A. Muratori", in *Per Vito Fumagalli, Terra, uomini, istituzioni medievali*, eds. M. Montanari and A. Vasina (Bologna, 2000), pp. 515–538; *Carteggio muratoriano: corrispondenti e bibliografia*, eds. F. Missere Fontana and R. Turricchia (Bologna, 2008).

4.1 Anton Felice Marsili (1651–1710)

Delle Sette de' Filosofi, e del Genio di Filosofare

4.1.1. Philosopher and naturalist, *erudito*, and hagiographer as well as a man of the Church, Anton Felice Marsili (or Marsigli) was born in Bologna on 30th May, 1651, into a noble and illustrious family (he was the elder brother of Luigi Ferdinando, the well-known scientist, traveller, and soldier, and a relative of Cesare Marsili junior, one of the correspondants and collaborators of Galileo). Member of the *Accademia dei Gelati* of Bologna from the age of 16, he graduated in philosophy and civil and canon law in his home city and then spent a period of time in Rome. When he

returned to Bologna he took holy orders and devoted himself to study. Holding the position of University Lecturer, in 1686 he took on the joint offices of archdeacon of the cathedral and Great Chancellor of the University; in the same period, he set up two academies in his own house, dedicated to philosophy and ecclesiastical history. He was on terms with some of the major cultural figures of the period, in particular the physician and scientist Marcello Malpighi, who had been his professor of logic at university before he went on to teach medicine at Pisa, Bologna, and Messina, before finally becoming Papal archiater in 1691. Marsili was also friend and protector to the young Ludovico Antonio Muratori, who in 1694 dedicated a dissertation entitled *De primis Christianorum ecclesiis* to him. It was thanks to the intervention of Marsili and Count Giovan Giuseppe Orsi that in 1695 Muratori succeeded in getting himself appointed as prefect to the *Biblioteca Ambrosiana* by Count Carlo Borromeo. On the 23rd January, 1702, Marsili was appointed bishop of Perugia by Clement XI, and then assistant bishop to the Papal See (2nd June, 1707). He distinguished himself in this new position by his piety and zeal, encouraging, among other things, the re-establishment of the university in Perugia. He died of tuberculosis on 5th July, 1710 and was buried in Perugia cathedral.

4.1.2. Marsili's writings testify to the variety of his cultural interests. He made his debut with a youthful dissertation *Delle Sette de' Filosofi, e del Genio di Filosofare. Discorso del Sig. Antonio Felice Marsili*, which was published in the *Prose de' Signori Accademici Gelati di Bologna* [...] *pubblicate sotto il principato accademico del Sig. Co. Valerio Zani*, in Bologna, edited by Manolessi, 1671, pp. 299–318 (modern ed. in G. Piaia, *I filosofi e le chiocciole. Operette di Anton Felice Marsili (1649–1710)* (Assisi, 1995), pp. 79–114). He subsequently published the *Orazione panegirica in onore della Concezione di Maria Vergine* (Bologna, 1680), and the *Relazione del ritrovamento delle uova di Chiocciole* [...] *in una lettera al Sig. Marcello Malpighi celebre Professore di Medicina* (Bologna, 1683; modern ed. in Piaia, *I filosofi e le chiocciole*, pp. 115–139). This latter scientific work brought Marsili international fame, as it was translated into Latin (Antonii Felicis Abatis Marsili *De ovis cochlearum, Epistola ad Marcellum Malpighium Med. Bononiensem cum Joh. Jacob Harderi etc. epistolis aliquot de partibus genitalibus cochlearum, generatione item insectorum ex ovo etc.*, Augsburg, 1684) and then inserted into volume II of Malpighi's works (London, 1687). The *Relazione* is aimed at confuting (on the basis of live observations carried out by the author in his "little garden of simples" and with the aid of a microscope) the theory of spontaneous generation, which had been put forward again by the Jesuit Filippo Buonanni in his *Ricreazione dell'occhio, e della mente nell'osservation delle chiocciole* (1681). Buonanni's work gave rise to great controversy in European scientific circles, a controversy which lasted some 20 years and which saw the intervention of Redi, Lister, Malpighi, and Vallisneri, in other words, the most eminent exponents of the new biology. Marsili can take credit for having replied to Buonanni's theory first, and in the same year Buonanni replied back with his *Riflessioni sopra la relatione del ritrovamento dell'uova delle chiocciole*. Beyond its strictly scientific aspect, this question had great implications of a philosophical nature, and indeed

much of Marsili's work is devoted to considerations of a theoretical and historical nature, not lacking in polemical overtones aimed at the Peripatetics.

Marsili then published a collection of documents preceded by a historical study of the functions of the chancellors of the universities and in particular that of Bologna (*Delle prerogative del Cancellierato maggiore dello Studio generale di Bologna*, Bologna, 1692) and the *Osservazioni sopra i due sepolcri antichi ritrovati nella Villa di Cinquanta nel Bolognese*, included in the work *Marmora Felsinea* by count Carlo Malvasia (Bologna, 1690). He also worked on a treatise of "natural things belonging to the territory of Bologna", which remained unfinished due to the pressure of more important commitments, and a critical account of the lives of Bolognese saints, from which he drew lessons and orations to be used in the breviary of the diocese, it too unpublished.

4.1.3. Marsili's links with Malpighi and his interest in natural history denote a philosophical and scientific orientation which can be placed in the great Galilean tradition, which precisely in this period (1657–1667) enjoyed a fruitful revival in the *Accademia del Cimento*. This orientation is already clearly expressed in Marsili's youthful dissertation *Delle Sette de' Filosofi, e del Genio di Filosofare*. Marsili conceived of philosophy above all as knowledge of nature. "The desire to know, to know Nature, is what so frequently sends pupils to the schools, and students to the professorial chairs", he declares at the beginning of his dissertation. After touching on the great variety of opinions and sects in the ancient world, and the resulting "confusion", he defines the "various ways of philosophizing of the moderns", which can be reduced essentially to two: "Many swear by one philosopher, and want him as their guide; others free from this oath wish to be led by experience. Some begin from the true, others try to bring authority together with the true. One is the more practiced method, the other is held to be the safer" (*Delle Sette*, ed. Piaia, p. 85).

These concepts are taken up again in the last part of the dissertation, devoted to the "genius of philosophizing". Here Marsili echoes the typical themes of Galileo and his school, from criticism of the principle of authority to the distinction between faith and science, the invitation to read the book of nature, and the exaltation of experience: "If I can express my own opinion I would say that making oneself the vassal of a dominant philosophy is vanity of the intellect, not a desire for knowledge based on evidence. To swear *in verba magistri* is a religion for the theologians, but for the philosophers (let me tell you) it is obstinacy. This is confusing faith with science. It was said by a great man, is it true therefore? What else could be deduced by reason if God were revealer in natural things? It seems to me to show a lack of consideration to subject the intellect to the will, since the intellect is by nature first in being and in operation [. . .] [They say:] I wish to follow (for example) Aristotle, in the belief that he actually said these things; but doing this implies restricting oneself to reading the little book of a single Author and neglecting the great volume of Nature. From this attitude there arises a fanatical literature, a friend of dispute and not of sound reasoning. To defend the Master the schools become training grounds, applause is won by running out of breath. Quoting a text prejudices reason, and those two words, *ipse dixit*, are the solution to a thousand problems" (pp. 103–104).

In contrast with this first "way of philosophizing", the second is that "in which the intellect, captivated by experience, leaves authority, following a different method from that of the Lawyer who forms true decisions by quoting the text. What insipid taste, to repudiate experience as a master and to accept a faction as a lord! [. . .] The hardened hand of the Artisan knows more than the dumbfounded head of the Disputant, and it was wisely said that the workshops philosophized more than the schools" (pp. 104–105). At this point Marsili refers in a note to Chapter IV of the posthumous work by Giovanni Ciampoli, *Dei fragmenti*, printed in Bologna in 1654; this quotation is particularly significant since Ciampoli (1589–1643) was a fervent supporter of Galileo and his school and reaffirmed among other things the need for a "just concord" between faith and nature, religion and science. "He who wishes to become a physicist", Marsili continues, "should first open his eyes and close his ears. Nor do I need to deviate from Aristotle to confirm this: 'When sense is set aside the mind is weak' (*Ipso sensu posthabitu imbecillitas est mentis*). [. . .] Aristotle teaches that philosophizing is born of wonder. [. . .] Wonder arises primarily from those things which are known to the senses, while their reasons are obscure to the intellect, so who can be a Philosopher if he does not begin from the senses and does not progress sensibly? Aristotle was right to mock the Ancients who 'given over to contemplation despised experience'. And if from his tomb he were able to look on these Partisans of his, how could he ever recognize them as students of the Lyceum, a school where sense experience was so important?" After this rehabilitation of Aristotle in an empirical and naturalist sense, Marsili gives himself over to the anti-scholastic controversy and reaffirms the need to found knowledge on experience, with a reference – it too significant – to the Royal Society of London: "Oh God, what torment! To spend entire years studying those *entia rationis*, those *formalitates*; to confuse physics with metaphysics, and God forbid that they should steal the arguments of theology [. . .] Ah! please, let us place the *non plus ultra* of speculation in those things which the operating hand of God constituted for the senses. Let us take as our subject the sensible world, and free from all obligation to authority, let us limit our discourse to real subjects, placing ourselves under the guidance not of the will but of the zeal for truth. Let every School carve out over its entrance the coat of arms of the London Academy, which bears a field of silver, signifying a *tabula rasa*, animated by the motto *Nullius in verba* " (pp. 105–106).

Further on there is a paragraph containing a series of scientific opinions (of an astronomical, physical, and zoological nature) upheld by the ancients, which subsequent experience has shown to be completely unfounded. After this, Marsili invites the "philosophers of today" to pursue new paths, since "we are more obliged to Dedalus, who invented sails, and Mercury, discoverer of the cithara, than we are to all the babbling heard from the Greek masters' chairs. [. . .] In any case he who feels inspired to glory, let him add wings to his back and fly and not follow in the footsteps of others, but let him be able to say, *Non aliena meo pressi pede*. And although flight is sometimes accompanied by a fall, the ascents are more honourable than the falls are ignominious. Phaeton's precipitous fall is to be commiserated and the daring of the spirited youth is not to be condemned. [. . .] How much there is that has been found, but how much remains to be found! Let each man seek to equal by his

own industry the fame attained by the great men of the past with their own labours. It is barbarian cruelty to steal the spoils from deceased writers", insists Marsili in a crescendo of baroque images, "it is to imitate the foul raven to feed on the corpses and rotting flesh of the Greeks and Latins in seeking a philosophical repast for the hungry intellect" (*Delle Sette*, pp. 110–111; these themes were to be taken up again in the *Relazione del ritrovamento delle uova di chiocciole*, ed. Piaia, pp. 122–125).

In the epilogue, the young Marsili anticipates the accusation of presumption and, following Aristotle himself, reasserts the primacy of the search for truth: "I do not pretend to correct abuses, an undertaking not appropriate to my age and my knowledge. I speak to myself to satisfy myself. If saying that I revere the ancient philosophers as Oracles of the Chairs, and not as Trumpets of the Gospel, that I do not take the Text as a Sacrament, but that I agree with it where it is true, if this is a prejudice of modesty, then so be it. By philosophizing I would like to know, and not to believe. Let them correct me in this error if they can, in particular the Peripatetics, who in enormous letters read in the works of their Master: 'It is seen to be better and necessary for the sake of truth that each man and philosophers in particular confute all their own theories; indeed if two philosophers are friends, it is their sacred duty to prefer to attribute honour to the truth rather than to each other' " (*Delle Sette*, p. 114; cfr. *Eth. Nic*. I, 4, 1096a 11–16). It is in the context of this theoretical orientation that we find the outline of the history of philosophy which is sketched by Marsili in the first part of his *Discorso* and which is preliminary to his reflections on the "genius of philosophizing": "And to discuss the first [way of philosophizing, founded on the principle of authority], which has become the partisan of one faction and is subservient to the ancient philosophers, it is necessary to review their precepts and then to decide between them" (*Delle Sette*, p. 85). Although he criticizes the principle of authority on which the ancient sects rested, Marsili does not reach the point of denying all the usefulness of studying the philosophies of the past. Nor can it be said that his reference to the ancient philosophers only serves to illustrate historically an erroneous way of philosophizing, as is that of the sects. Indeed it is in philosophy's most remote past that Marsili locates – as we will see later – the founder or the precursor of that experimental philosophy which alone permits us to know "the great volume of Nature".

4.1.4. *Delle Sette de' Filosofi, e del Genio di Filosofare*

4.1.4.1. Marsili's little work is divided into 20 paragraphs with an *Epilogo e scusa*. The first two serve as an introduction, paragraphs III–XV (ed. Piaia, pp. 85–103) contain an outline of the history of philosophy, and the remaining paragraphs are devoted to theoretical observations (XVI: "Freedom to philosophize praised"; XVII: "Experience guide to philosophizing"; XVIII: "Tedious way of philosophizing"; XIX: "Sayings of the great philosophers falsified by experience"; XX: "Exhortation to Philosophers of today"). In the margin, besides the titles of the paragraphs and some of the sections, there are numerous bibliographical references.

4.1.4.2. At the end of his consideration of the series of Greek schools, Marsili divides philosophy into three great periods: barbarian philosophy, Greek, and "modern": "Among the Ionian, Eleatic, and Italic sects, these are the most celebrated

either for their fame or their followers. The glorious Schools of the Barbarians, who invited the Masters of Greece to become disciples of the Persians, the Indians, and the Egyptians, are nowadays unknown even by name. The modern sects, which are like daughters, mostly of the Peripatos, I now omit. Some of them were born in these recent times; however they find more curious people who admire them than partisans who follow them". Among these latter sects Marsili names "magnetic philosophy", whose principal exponents are indicated as William Gilbert († 1603) and the two Jesuits Niccolò Cabeo († 1650) and Athanasius Kircher († 1680). "Other moderns", continues the author, "have brought back to life the dogmas of some extinct Philosopher, and therefore do not deserve to be called the founders of sects. Let Gassendi be an example as a follower of Epicurus, and [Jean-Chrysostome] Magnen as a follower of Democritus". After this the historical account closes with a reference to the "elective sect" founded by Potamon of Alexandria (p. 103). More than a real periodization, therefore, Marsili offers a division into various sects, from which he excludes all those modern philosophers who, following experience and not authority, are foreign to the spirit and the structure of the "sect".

4.1.4.3. Marsili begins his historical profile by mentioning the state of his sources: the course of history has meant that of the ancient philosophers "the names of many are alive, and the works of few"; thus "Aristotle escaped by a miracle into the hands of the Moors, from whom he was redeemed by the generosity of the Emperor Frederick II, and", notes the author, with municipal pride "was sent to reign in our University of Bologna. Plato was given to Italy by the Emperor of the Greeks at the Council of Florence, a marvellous refusal to die. As for the others, either Laertius or Plato or Aristotle speaks of them, and Seneca, Sextus Empiricus, or Plutarch remembers them" (§ III: *De' Filosofi che sono rimasti*, pp. 85–86).

The first founder of a school to be considered is Epicurus, who is the object of a harsh condemnation and whose "pride" gives Marsili the opportunity of intervening on the theme of the origin of philosophy and the relations between Greece and the Orient: "Epicurus was the proudest of the Greeks, the most impious of Philosophers. He dared to profess that no one, unless he were Greek, was fit to philosophize; and this is too arrogant a self-persuasion". Referring to the Fathers and to Josephus Flavius the author declares that "Wisdom was not born in Greece, and was not brought up alone in the schools of Athens, no less than in those of Rhodes; 'Once it shined here and there among the Barbarians, and in the end it also came to the Greeks', and from the Greeks to the Latins. And if Flavius Josephus does not err, there in the fields of Damascus it played like a child with the infancy of the world. [. . .] Plato and Aristotle dispassionately condemn this arrogance. Although in his preface Laertius seems to accept Epicurus's position, denying if not the use of Wisdom then at least its invention to the Barbarians, this belief is of weak foundation compared with the opinion which he himself confesses is common" (pp. 86–87; cf. Diog. Laert. I, 4). As far as the "impiety" of Epicurus is concerned, this is dealt with in a paragraph of its own and refers both to the conduct of his life and to his doctrines. Marsili does not share in Gassendi's rehabilitation of the Greek philosopher; he begins by asserting that "in order to demonstrate Epicurus's impiety I will not

use the testimony of Fame, which the pen of Pierre Gassendi has rendered suspect. Other reasons demonstrate it. In the first place, how much infamy against man and the Gods is Epicurus not accused of by the multitude of contemporaries recalled by Laertius? Certainly it is true that he strives to reject them, maintaining that Epicurus is different from the way he is commonly believed to be: however the witnesses are so forceful that refuting them without proof leaves he who refutes them as unreliable; so, he was impious in his customs, or it is not certain that he was pious. It has to be seen whether this title suits him as far as precepts are concerned. Here I omit the zeal of the Holy Fathers who hold Epicurus as the preceptor of Atheism. From his own dogmas will I make the evidence known" (p. 88). Marsili identifies three fundamental principles in the doctrines of Epicurus: "God is not the cause of the world", which was, rather, the work of chance; "the care of the World and of the human race is not a fitting task for the Divine mind"; and "blessed happiness consists of the happiness of the senses". "Gassendi", concludes the author in a resolute tone, "will never be able to introduce a spark of piety into Epicurus unless he shows him to be different from Epicurus" (pp. 89–90).

Unlike the school of Epicurus, revived by the work of Gassendi, very little space is given over to the Stoic school, which is quoted together with that of Pythagoras merely in order to state that it existed ("Talking about Pythagoras and Zeno [. . .] would be like raking the ashes buried in the oblivion of so many centuries; indeed it would be like throwing ash to the wind"). Marsili limits himself to recalling Zeno's "goodness of customs" and the erection of a statue to Pythagoras by the Romans; as far as the doctrines of these philosophers are concerned, "Did Zeno teach atoms [*sic!*] under the porch famous for the work of Polygnotus, and Pythagoras numbers in Croton" (p. 90). Despite his scientific interests and his links with the school of Galileo, Marsili does not seem to emphasize the progress which Pythagoras and his followers brought to mathematics. After mentioning the "dissolute life" of Diogenes the Cynic, who is contrasted with the personality of Socrates (§§ VII–VIII), the author takes up a position against the opinion of "that bizarre Pyrrho", who "left off his brush to take up the pen, and changing his profession from mechanist to Philosopher rendered his name eternal with hopeless teachings". The reduction of knowledge to a "knowing how to doubt" is judged to be "the greatest enemy of sense, contrary to the common opinion, but not short of followers". Following on from Laertius, the author lists the ancient philosophers who in some of their statements were attracted by Pyrrho's thesis, but he observes that "they used however rather humble terms or a display of humility to confound the insolence of the ignorant, rather than to adhere to Pyrrho" (p. 93). Marsili the naturalist also distances himself from Plato, whom he refuses to consider as a true philosopher: "Aristocles, who was thereafter called Plato, is to be admired as a Theologian, but not to be followed as a Philosopher: as a Theologian, who spoke of God idolatrously philosophizing. He despised Nature, almost as if it were a low object with respect to the level of his thoughts". He mentions the arrival in Italy of the works of Plato at the time of Eugene IV and the success of this thinker "in the heroic centuries of the primitive Church", recognizing that "if one considers it carefully, Holy Scripture

agrees in many respects with Plato's Dialogues" (§ X, pp. 93–95, where there is a list of the "teachings of our faith" which "can be recognized in this Philosopher").

Marsili takes a very different attitude towards Democritus, however, who is extolled as the first experimental philosopher in a singular mixture of baroque exaggeration and scientific taste: "Oh if only Democritus, as fortunate as Plato, had survived the massacres, our moderns would not shed their tears so prodigally in deploring the loss of his works. The Vandals and the Goths harmed letters as much by burning Democritus as they damaged the Roman Empire by lacerating Europe. He averted the flames from the emulator Plato with the aid of Amicla and Clinia to remain the target of the military cruelty of the North in rebellion. He lives however by a miracle common to many of the ancients, cut up into various excerpts in the works of the Authors who escaped. [. . .] He was the first to deserve the name Philosopher, because he was the first Philosopher to recognize the importance of the senses, he who 'spent his life in experiments'. He conceived of a great mosaic of atoms as the building blocks of the Universe. He assigned as principles things not very remote from sense, banning chimera from his doctrines. He was the first who 'remained anchored to nature' (*in Natura inhabitass et*) and abhorring those lofty words, and those concepts not understood, formed the conclusions of the Intellect uniquely from the reports of the senses. From this it derives that the pride of the Greeks and the Latins was satisfied to recognize him according to the definition of Epicurus as he who 'first attained right knowledge and who first conquered the principles of nature'. [. . .] He did not resort to Ideas, to occult Qualities, to Sympathy or to Magnetism, to build an Asylum (as the Chemists say) to ignorance. He did not introduce a *Deus ex machina* to resolve the comedy, like Anaxagoras, but according to the testimony of Aristotle, 'persuaded with real and natural reasons', with diagrams of the atoms, and with the motion proper to them, he taught Nature in particular" (pp. 95–98).

In a later paragraph, Marsili dwells on the "agreement between Democritus and Aristotle", stating that "he who looks through Aristotle reads a continuous panegyric of Democritus and perceives an open friendship", and he adds as proof several passages from the *De generatione*. Marsili goes on to emphasize the "coherence of principles" between the two philosophers: matter, form, and privation can already be discerned in Democritus, and in this case too he brings to bear quotations from Aristotle, from the *Physics* and the *Metaphysics*. "They may reply as they like", comments Marsili, "those who believe Aristotle to be the implacable enemy of Democritus: either Aristotle is contrary to himself or he is not contrary to Democritus; this an insoluble Dilemma. The text is clear. I now speak briefly, but it will not be long before a great Genius to whom I owe the debt of a disciple will reconcile these Philosophers. He will remove the unhappy Democritus from the catalogue of Atheists and show him on his knees before the Altars as one who has knowledge of the Deity; he will lead him with Christian industry to serve in the Temple with the other Philosophers. The Academies will see St. Thomas imitated, he of whom it was said that 'he made Aristotle Christian', while the zeal of a Monk 'will make Democritus Christian'" (pp. 99–100).

This vindication of Democritus is to be situated in the context of his rediscovery in the late Renaissance period and the early seventeenth century (it is enough to think of Giordano Bruno or Magnen's *Democritus reviviscens*, which was printed in Pavia in 1646, or the frequent presence of Democritus in the works of Bacon, and his *De principiis atque originibus secundum fabulas Cupidinis et Coeli*, published in 1653, in particular). In Marsili, however, praise for Democritus takes on a very particular form which has nothing in common with Bruno's speculative approach, but which can be directly linked to the positions held by the Benedictine monk Vitale Terrarossa (1623–1692), who was Marsili's master of philosophy at the University of Bologna, where he taught from 1655 to 1672 before moving to Ferrara and then to Padua. It is to him that Marsili alludes with youthful enthusiasm in the passage quoted above: in effect, during his teaching at Bologna, Terrarossa had written a work entitled *Clavis aurea Aristotelis, sive prodromus concordiae omnium philosophorum*, which remained unpublished like his other philosophical works, and in which he set himself the task of reconciling the theories of Aristotle with those of Democritus. This position held by Terrarossa and Marsili also seems to be linked to positions maintained by Lorenzo Magalotti, secretary of the *Accademia del Cimento*, in his *Lettere familiari*. Magalotti was combatting atheists and materialists, but at the same time he affirms in Galilean spirit the autonomy of scientific research, and on a scientific level recognizes the validity of Democritus' materialistic system. In particular, and to the same extent as Marsili, he refers to the "Christianization" of Aristotle carried out by Aquinas, expressing a desire to see an analogous process for Democritus: "Now, I say, since St.Thomas, without taking fright from past disorders, was able to restore this most beautiful statue of Aristotelian philosophy by remodelling its head, in the very same way a remodelling of the head of that of Democritus might perhaps appear one day to be something of not such bad taste" (Garin, II, p. 854).

But Marsili's attitude towards Aristotle appears on the whole to be ambiguous: on the one hand the distinction between the Stagirite and his degenerate followers, the Scholastics (see para 4.1.3), brings to mind the imagine of a philosopher devoted "to sensible experiments", and the comparison with Democritus itself seems to give credit to Aristotle; on the other, we must ask ourselves whether this "positive" image of the greatest philosopher of Antiquity is not above all the result of Marsili's polemical and dialectic ability, which aims at placing the modern Peripatetics in contradiction with their master. The paragraph dedicated to Aristotle (XIII) does not remove this doubt, since after a reference to the greatness of the philosopher, who is dealt with last but is "first in fame", Marsili lingers over the accusations of impiety and immorality brought against him by Laertius, the Fathers, Francesco Patrizi, and Ciampoli; he passes over the defence of Aristotle, "which is very common and comes from the pens of so many writers", and he limits himself to recalling the work of the assimilation of Aristotle carried out by the Church, which "rendered him tributary [. . .] and purged of his errors, introduced him as a servant and not as a preceptor into the Sanctuary" (pp. 100–102).

Among the modern sects, the only one which is treated at any length is, as we have seen, "magnetic philosophy". "Some", observes Marsili, re-echoing perhaps

the criticisms which had been made of Cabeo's *Philosophia magnetica* (1629) in Galilean circles, "accuse it of being too universal and see in it Peripatetic occult qualities with more particular names explained" (pp. 102–103). As a "history of the sects", the brief history of philosophy outlined by Marsili does not refer to modern thinkers, followers of the "second way of philosophizing". They are mentioned however in the following section of the work, precisely in paragraph XX ("Exhortation to Philosophers of today"), where Marsili takes a stand in the controversy between the ancients and the moderns, naturally taking the side of the latter: "It is true that those great geniuses [= the Ancients] were academies of knowledge, but not an epilogue of the sciences: 'They are said to have known many things, not everything'. If virtue was so fecund in the minds of the Ancients, not for this did it become sterile in those who followed. [...] Nothing would be found if we were satisfied with what has been found. He who follows others finds nothing and indeed seeks nothing, as Seneca exaggerated. Nature, after having created Aristotle and Plato, did not lose the models for making Aristotles and Platos". It is in this context that the author mentions several of the greatest philosophers and scientists of the seventeenth century, no longer distinguished by sect, but by nationality: "The Colleges of London which under the shadow of the learned sceptre of Charles II challenge the centuries of Augustus and Trajan, have given birth to the Vossiuses,[2] the Harveys, the Boyles, who have no reason to envy France's Descartes and Gassendi and Italy's innumerable Philosophers, who united together do not come second to the Ancients in anything but time".[3]

Marsili shows a definite leaning towards the experimental approach of the English (Descartes, on the other hand, is quoted only once in the entire work and without any comment), and he waxes lyrical in praise of the English sovereign: "The leisure of his private life in conspiracy with fortune created for this King [= Charles II] the title of the most glorious Prince and the most learned Philosopher of Europe, he who renews our memories of Juba, and Hieron, Attalus and Archelaus, kings famous because they were Philosophers". Marsili then names with enthusiasm some of the "modern great men" (among whom are the Medieval Albert the Great and Raymund Lull) and extols the geographical and astronomical discoveries and inventions made in the modern age, expressed in the trio Christopher Columbus, Flavio Gioia, and Galileo: "Oh, if Laertius could behold what has been written by our Aldrovandi [Ulisse, 1522–1605, Bolognese doctor, naturalist, and philosopher], our Cardano; what Albert the Great and Raymund Lull have invented with all the ranks of modern philosophers of nature, he would perhaps abstain from saying that, 'Aristotle exceeded the measure of the human genius, and did not treat any part of

[2]Marsili alludes here to the erudite Dutchman Isaak Vossius († 1689), the son of Gerhard Johann, who had moved to England in 1670, devoting himself to the study of mathematics and natural history.

[3]A more explicit reference to contemporary Italian "philosophers" is to be found in the *Relazione*, where it is said of Redi that "together with you [= Malpighi], with you both accompanied by Mr. Cassini [the famous astronomer], he upholds the ancient pre-eminence of our Italy above every other Nation in the glory of the sciences" (*Relazione*, ed. Piaia, pp. 121–122).

Philosophy which he did not deal with perfectly' [Diog. Laert., 5, 21 and 34b]. And Tully would limit that praise, 'Nature has been investigated by the Peripatetics to such an extent that no part of the sky or of the sea has been neglected' [Cic., *De fin*., 5, 4, 9]. Who was it that taught that one could navigate beyond the Ocean to new Lands, that Worlds of gold would open up there? Who made vessels safe in their voyages by the use of the magnet? Who was it that discovered the sun to be curiously spotted? Who pointed out the four little Medicean Stars, glorious for being the handmaidens of Jove, and fortunate for bearing the names of the most revered Princes of Italy? These discoveries were set aside for the Columbuses, the Flavios, and the Galileos, who by far excede the admiration felt for Tiphis [= the mythical pilot of the ship Argo], and Hipparchus" (pp. 112–114).

An interesting confirmation of Marsili's attitude to the theme of the ancients and the moderns is to be had in the *Relazione*, where, though criticizing Peripateticism, he tones down the spirit of antagonism which had animated his youthful work. He seems to prefer the category of "continuity" to that of a "break", and it is in this spirit that he applies the thesis of the "most ancient wisdom" to biological theories, in opposition to the theory of spontaneous generation: "And this doctrine" – that is, "that the first universal principle of all species comes from the egg, or from something analogous to it" – "is not a whimsical find of the Innovators, because if we collect all that information which transpires from ancient papers, perhaps we could call it rather rediscovered than learnt from scratch. It seems that the ancient Egyptians, who with the Asians learned the sciences from those first men, disciples of God himself, and who through the Greeks and then the Latins and then the Arabs handed it down to us by legitimate succession, by representing the generation of the world in their hieroglyphics by means of the egg, wished to indicated precisely this. Let me be allowed, without any irreverence, to think that perhaps the most remote Antiquity was by no means ignorant of Mosaic traditions, which were later sullied by Mythologists and Poets, and that it could draw some inspiration from this tradition to believe this". Marsili stops to consider the term *merahefet* used at the beginning of the book of Genesis, then moves on from these "obscure glimmers" to the "more renowned masters", such as Plutarch, Macrobius, Hippocrates, and Aristotle. In such a way he comes to recover the very concept of "authority" which had been subjected to radical criticism in the dissertation *Delle Sette de' Filosofi*, and which is now considered in a balanced relation with reason and experience: "Thanks to the clarity of these and other authorities, whom I omit so as not to go on to an excessive length, anyone will be persuaded that even the Ancients reduced the generation of all things to the principle of the egg. [. . .] So, we can believe that the Moderns, enlightened by the teaching I mentioned above, having then examined these teachings with the sounding line of reason and with the exactitude of experiments, have taken up these opinions again, have made a transition from one piece of information to another, and have come closer to believing in the uniformity of Nature's operation in the production of all living beings; or at least, no longer under the illusion that she propagates species without their own seed, they have abolished those expressions spontaneous birth, and putrefaction" (*Relazione*, ed. Piaia, pp. 118–121).

4.1.4.4. Marsili's outline of the history of philosophy is based on the framework of the sects and is limited to the founders of these schools, while modern experimental philosophers are placed outside this framework and are distinguished, as we have seen, by nations. The author does not give any information of a bio-bibliographical nature, but he does mention the fundamental doctrines of each philosopher and subjects them to critical observations. Besides the usual classical and patristic sources, he directly uses some of the works of Plato (the *Sophist*, *Phaedo*) and Aristotle (the *Metaphysics* and above all the scientific writings). Among modern writers he mentions Ficinus (used in the paragraph on Plato), Patrizi, Ciampoli, and Galileo, whose *Sidereus nuncius* is quoted twice.

4.1.5. Marsili's writing is not a systematic history of philosophy, but an "outline" sketched in the context of a brief academic dissertation. Nevertheless it is precisely the limited space and the lively tone which this literary genre impose that better reveal (as in the case of Bayle's dissertation in a letter) some lines of interpretation of particular interest. The discourse *Delle Sette de' Filosofi* indeed presents a cross-section of the way in which in Italy the philosophical and scientific approach inspired by Galileo was applied to the historical and philosophical past and used to evaluate its development. It is a type of approach which, although situated in the wider context of the opposition to Scholasticism and the principle of authority, presents its own characteristics with respect to the intellectual movement going on in the rest of Europe. Marsili in fact criticises Gassendi's revival of Epicurus, while extolling Democritus as an acute investigator of the natural world. Towards Descartes he shows a substantial lack of interest; his attention is drawn on the other hand to the Italian scientific tradition (in particular that of Bologna), which, far from being closed in provincialism, was directly linked to the experimental tendencies prevailing in English culture. Marsili's writing, therefore (like Coste's *Discours sur la philosophie* for the Cartesians), constitutes a sort of "historico-philosophical precipitate" of the Galilean school; it introduces an element of originality into the panorama of the seventeenth-century history of philosophy, even though it represents an isolated case that was not to be developed further.

4.1.6. On Marsili's life and works: GLI, VIII (1711), pp. 36–40 (obituary); G. Fantuzzi, *Notizie degli scrittori bolognesi*, V (Bologna, 1786), pp. 276–278; E. Bortolotti, "La fondazione dell'Istituto e le riforme dello Studio di Bologna", in *Memorie intorno a Luigi Ferdinando Marsili pubblicate nel II centenario della morte* (Bologna, 1930), pp. 383–471; A. Andreoli, "A.F. Marsili. Appunti per una biografia", *Strenna storica bolognese*, XVII (1967), pp. 39–50; M. Cavazza, *Settecento inquieto. Alle origini dell'Istituto delle Scienze di Bologna* (Bologna, 1990), pp. 79–117; G. Piaia, *I filosofi e le chiocciole. Operette di A.F. Marsili (1649–1710)* (Assisi, 1995) (Bibliography: pp. 73–78); Tolomio, *Italorum sapientia*, pp. 96–100; M. Cavazza, the entry *Marsili A.F.*, DBI, LXX, pp. 751–755. On father Terrarossa, Marsili's master of philosophy at Bologna University: F.L. Maschietto, *Benedettini professori all'Università di Padova (secoli XV–XVIII)* (Cesena-Padova, 1989), pp. 99–118. On Marsili's relations with Muratori: Bertelli, *Erudizione e storia*, pp. 22–24, 47–48, 78; A. Andreoli, *Nel mondo di Lodovico Antonio Muratori*

(Bologna, 1972), pp. 34–38, 57, 129, 132–137, 238, 350–351. On his connections with Italian philosophical and scientific culture: H.B. Adelmann, *Marcello Malpighi and the Evolution of Embryology* (Ithaca, N. Y., 1966), I, pp. 468, 497–510; II, pp. 819–832; Garin, pp. 838–863; Raimondi, *I lumi dell'erudizione.* pp. 18, 100, 112–115. On his polemic with Buonanni: P. Omodeo, the entry *Buonanni*, DBI, XV, pp. 305–311. On seventeenth-century atomism: B. Rochot, *Les travaux de Gassendi sur Épicure et sur l'atomisme, 1619–1658* (Paris, 1944); G. Stabile, *Claude Bérigard (1592–1663). Contributo alla storia dell'atomismo seicentesc*o (Rome, 1975); A. Alberti, *Gassendi e l'atomismo epicureo* (Florence, 1981); *Atoms, Pneuma and Tranquillity. Epicurean and Stoic Themes in European Thought*, ed. M.J. Osler (Cambridge, 1991); *Geometria e atomismo nella scuola galileiana*, ed. M. Bucciantini and M. Torrini (Florence, 1992); B. Gemelli, *Aspetti dell'atomismo classico nella filosofia di Francis Bacon e nel Seicento* (Florence, 1996); A. Clericuzio, *Elements, Principles and Corpuscles. A Study of Atomism and Chemistry in the Seventeenth Century* (Dordrecht, 2000) (see also below, para 4.3.6).

4.2 Leonardo Cozzando (1620–1702)

De magisterio antiquorum philosophorum

4.2.1. Born in 1620 in Rovato, near Brescia, Leonardo Cozzando entered the Order of Servites at the age of 12; having completed his studies, he taught philosophy in the schools of the Order in various cities and subsequently became regent master of theology in the college of St. Alexander in Brescia. He later held several offices in the Order, continuing all the same to devote himself actively to his historical and literary studies. His youthful *Corsi di penna* earned him admission to the Brescian *Accademia degli Erranti*. He spent his final years in the convent of Monte Orfano near Brescia, immersed in his studies. He died in 1702.

4.2.2. Cozzando wrote numerous works of erudition, most of which remain unedited. Besides his collection of academic pamphlets, *Corsi di penna* (Brescia, 1645), he published the lives of two Servites, Paolo Bigone and Ottavio Pantagato (Brescia, 1682), the bio-bibliographical catalogue *Della Libreria Bresciana nuovamente aperta* (Brescia, 1685–1694), *Il sagro tempio Servitano o' sia Vite de beati e santi dell'uno e dell'altro sesso della religione de' Servi della Gran Vergine Madre addolorata* (Vienna, 1693), *Il vago e curioso ristretto profano e sagro dell'Historia Bresciana* (Brescia, 1694), and the life of the poet Giov. Francesco Quinzano (Brescia, 1694). His *De plagiariis liber singularis* was published posthumously in volume II of the *Miscellanea di varie operette* (Venice, 1740). Cozzando also wrote a history of ancient philosophy: *De magisterio antiquorum philosophorum libri VI* (Geneva: apud Samuelem de Tournes, 1684). In it Cozzando cites some other works on the history of philosophy which he had written but which remained unpublished; these are an *Onomatologus seu Index*, which contains a collection of writers "who wrote on the sects, or the schools, or generally on the lives [of the philosophers], or

who dealt with some philosophers either in one place or scattered in several places, as the opportunity to talk of them arose", and several compilations on individual thinkers: *De percipienda virtute ad mentem Platonis*, *Epicurus expensus*, and *De humana felicitate ad mentem Epicuri* (cf. *De magisterio*, pp. ix, 54, 415).

4.2.3. In the preface of his *De magisterio*, Cozzando enthusiastically praises studies devoted to the history of philosophy: "What then could be more pleasant, what could be more delightful to know than Philosophical History, knowledge of the most famous Men, with whose thoughts I can educate myself so that my name may aspire to immortality on earth?" This opinion is supported by a long series of quotations from the classics and the Fathers of the Church (Cicero, Lucianus, Claudianus, Irenaeus, Origen. . .). Inspired by their example, Cozzando had also begun work on the history of philosophy at a very early age (he was not yet 18), but he was distracted from his labour by philosophical and theological disputes: "I ran into I do not know what race of men, known as Sophists: swindlers, as full of tricks and vain words, as they are of idleness, who distracted me from the sweet and friendly peace of my studies, and who led me unwilling and reluctant to their diatribes, which continually resound with the whirlwind of their disputations, the emptiness of their words and their enigmas, and which totally exclude all the grace of the Muses" (*De magisterio*, p. xvi). Having freed himself from them, he was able to return to his beloved studies and complete his "research into the teaching of the ancient philosophers", which was subsequently published at the urging of friends. Cozzando justifies the initiative by the fact that so little remains of the works of the ancient authors of the history of philosophy and that even Laertius (from whom he nevertheless admits to having borrowed much) contains certain gaps (p. xxviii).

Such is the genesis of the work, from which there emerges an interesting contrast between the study of the history of philosophy and the vain subtleties of the scholastic philosophy which then reigned in the schools of the religious orders. This opposition, however, remains in the form of a simple autobiographical anecdote and has no repercussions on a theoretical level. Indeed Cozzando shows no interest in the "new philosophy" and remains close to his scholastic training, based on the doctrines of Henry of Ghent (the official doctor of the Servite Order), whom he praises enthusiastically (see para 4.2.4.3). Rather than to Scholasticism itself, the critical and polemical observations of the preface relate to Cozzando's contemporary opponents.

4.2.4. *De magisterio antiquorum philosophorum*

4.2.4.1. The work is preceded by an *Epistola dedicatoria* to Ippolito Fenaroli (pp. i–vii, not numbered) and a *Prefatio ad lectorem* (pp. viii–xxix); the text consists of 412 pages, and is divided into 6 books, subdivided into 26 chapters; it has no notes and the bibliographical references are incorporated into the text. The last part of the book is constituted by a vast "Index of philosophers and principal topics" (137 pages, not numbered), which is followed by a list of "more serious errors" (*Errata graviora*); there is no summary index.

4.2.4.2. Cozzando mentions the three great periods of philosophy at the beginning of the work when he states, following in the footsteps of the most learned men, that all knowledge proceded from the Barbarians (above all the Hebrews) to the Greeks, and from them on to us. The organizing principle of the work are the sects, a principle which the author applies systematically, even though this makes a completely satisfactory periodization impossible. It is worth noting that the chronological limits go well beyond Antiquity, thanks to the succession of followers of Plato and Aristotle, bringing it up to the turn of the seventeenth century and creating space for some elements of periodization: in the context of the Platonic school, for example, Cozzando hints at the transmission of *litterae* from Greece to Italy in the fifteenth century and the consequent rebirth of studies, while his review of the Peripatetics in chronological order also includes Arabic and Latin thinkers of the Middle Ages. Cozzando seems to be aware of the inadequacy of his "Diadochistic" framework when he moves from Antiquity to more recent times. Indeed he observes that Albert the Great and Aquinas etc. should be placed "among the Scholastics rather than among the Peripatetics"; but this would involve the adoption of a precise historical period, such as Scholasticism, in place of the general category of "peripatetic philosophers [. . .] whose order of succession totally escapes me" (*De magisterio*, Book II, Chapter II).

Taking up the classic distinction between Ionian and Italic philosophy, the author devotes Book I to the teaching of Thales, Socrates, and Plato and his followers (the three Academies, the Neoplatonists, and the Christian Platonists up to the Renaissance). Book II is given over to Aristotle and the Peripatetics (the medieval Peripatetics are divided into the schools of Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Henry of Ghent, and Duns Scotus). Book III deals with the Cynics and the Stoics (among the Stoics *extra seriem* he quotes Roman thinkers, and Christians like Panthaenus and Clement of Alexandria). Book IV includes Aristippus and his followers, the Eleatic, Eretriachic, and Megaric schools, and Pyrrho and the Pyrrhonists. The final two books are devoted to Italic philosophy (Book V: Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans, Empedocles, the Eleatics . . .; Book VI: Epicurus and his followers, among whom are Lucianus of Samosata and Diogenes Laertius). The Eclectic School is not dealt with in the discussion.

4.2.4.3. Given its nature as a compilation, Cozzando's work has little to say on an interpretative level. Most of the time, the author simply collects information from the various sources and sets it out in order without any historical or philological discussion or any judgement of a theoretical nature (see for example, the theme of the origins of scepticism: pp. 276–277). In the case of Epicurus, however, he goes further: after a series of opinions in favour and against this philosopher (from Cicero, Seneca, and other Roman writers on one hand, and Petrarch on the other), he refers to Augustine's *De utilitate credendi ad Honoratum* to suggest the usefulness of the interpretative error made by Seneca and other thinkers who saw in certain of Epicurus's statements an affirmation that virtue coincides with the greatest good (pp. 396–397; Cozzando had previously quoted Gassendi [p. 390] among the biographers of Epicurus, adding however that he had not yet had the opportunity of reading his work).

The tight "succession" of philosophers (over 250) which form the structure of Cozzando's work does not leave him much room for any wide-ranging conclusions. Only in Chapter I ("The Greeks falsely claim the origin of philosophy as their own") does the author make any reference to a big historiographical question: he criticises the opinion held by Diodorus Siculus and Diogenes Laertius and stresses that "philosophy flowered much earlier among the Barbarians (under the guidance and the auspices of God, from whom every good, and above all wisdom, derives) than among the Greeks", bringing to bear numerous sources. Immediately afterwards, however, he recognises that it was in Greece that philosophy developed to the greatest extent and that it reached its peak with Aristotle who rendered it ordered, systematic, and complete. On the other hand, Cozzando does not examine Barbarian philosophy, merely listing some of the most ancient sages to have lived outside Greece, and he refers those desirous of more information on the origin and development of Barbarian thought to Hornius's *Historia philosophica* (*De magisterio*, pp. 1–11).

The most interesting sections from the historiographical point of view are those on the Platonists and the Aristotelians *extra seriem et successionem*, those, that is, who do not fit into the rigorous Diadochistic framework codified by the ancient historians. In this case, the release from an adherence to the classical model gives rise to an account of a less impersonal nature. The "family" of the Platonists is very varied: besides Philo Judaeus, Dionysius the Areopagite, Apuleius, Plutarch, Hypathia, and other writers of the Hellenistic period, there are also several Fathers (Justinus, Tatian, Augustine), the Byzantine Michael Psellus, and characters like the Ostrogothic king Theodatus, and Chosroes, king of Persia. Worth noting above all is the importance given to Henry of Ghent, who is defined as he who restored Platonic philosophy to Paris ("you began to revive the docrine of Plato, which was by then almost completely dead, you continually exhorted your listeners to read it, to learn it well, to explain it . . ."). The familiar tone with which Cozzando addresses Henry is due to the fact that the latter's thought formed the basis of his youthful studies ("I am somebody who, since my adolescence in Brescia, has been nourished with the milk of your doctrine"), under the guidance of Girolamo Cavazutti, an "excellent man, accomplished in learning". Cozzando points out that Henry also possessed a profound knowledge of Peripatetic philosophy, as revealed by his most learned works, "which have survived the jaws of envious time", and by the testimony of Trithemius and the Jesuits of Coimbra. Nevertheless he believes that Henry devoted himself more to Plato, and accepts the judgement expressed by Jacopo Mazzoni in his *De comparatione Aristotelis et Platonis*: "Of all scholastics, Henry of Ghent is the only one fully to deserve the name Platonic" (pp. 111–112; the author's training *in via Gandavensis* in the schools of the Servites can also be perceived in the references he makes to seventeeth-century editions of Henry's *Summa*, see p. 177). Cozzando then dwells on numerous exponents of Renaissance Platonism, from Pletho to the Venetians, Pietro Bembo, and Giovanni Badoer, stressing in particular the role played by princely patrons like the Medici and pope Nicholas V in the rebirth of letters after the "great shipwreck" which befell them with the fall of Byzantium (pp. 116–117).

After the commentators of Late Antiquity, the succession of Peripatetics includes above all Boethius, who is the object of impassioned praise (pp. 164–165). The repeated Barbarian invasions of Italy and the destruction by fire of the library of Constantinople at the time of Zeno marked a grave crisis in philosophy, which, "having gathered up its belongings", was forced to emigrate to other lands: France, Germany, England, and above all Spain, with the Moors. After a long list of Arab philosophers and astronomers, Cozzando returns to Christian Europe and mentions Abelard, who – according to Trithemius – was the first to mix philosophy with theology. Cozzando observes that this method is not to everybody's taste and he cites the criticisms made by Vives. The four major Scholastics (Albert the Great, Aquinas, Henry of Ghent, and Duns Scotus) are spoken of in a eulogistic tone, above all Aquinas, light and doctor of the Church, whose doctrine is universally admired and cultivated in Church councils and schools ("Who, then I ask, is more learned, who sharper, more inquisitive, who richer than he, and, most importantly, who is clearer?": p. 176). William of Ockham is quoted merely as the "antagonist" of Duns Scotus; Cozzando dwells on the conflict between Scotus and his beloved master, Henry of Ghent, touching on those questions which were the subject of controversy and justifying Scotus's attitude with his need to "draw water from his own well" rather than from that of others. Implicitly responding to those who had criticised the disputes between these two Scholastics, Cozzando points out that from disputes conducted peacefully "to hunt the truth, not to capture some small glory", truth ensues in the highest degree (pp. 178–182).

4.2.4.4. The work's approach, and indeed its title, show that Cozzando remains rigidly tied to the framework of historiography by sects ("the 'genealogists' method", as Bayle defines Cozzando's criterion of the derivation of one sect from another). Within this framework he presents the profiles of the individual authors in an ordered succession, in which he deals with their lives (often limited to their dates of birth and death), their masters and disciples, and the praise or criticism attributed to them. What is often not included, however, is a reference to their works and the content of their thought, in other words, the *placita* which lie outside the framework of the "succession of philosophers" (*successio philosophorum*). Besides classical quotations, Cozzando uses renaissance authors (Marsilius Ficinus, Poliziano, Giovanni Pico, Melchior Cano, and Pereira. . .) and writers of the seventeenth century; among those belonging to the Germanic area, Hornius and Vossius are quoted on more than one occasion, while Goclenius, Keckermann, and Lucas Holstenius are merely mentioned.

4.2.5. The *De magisterio antiquorum philosophorum* was immediately reviewed by Bayle in the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* where he defined it as "a treatise which provides pleasant instruction". He provides a short summary of the contents of the work, which gives him the opportunity of extolling the "progress of philosophy among the Greeks" and of praising the virtue of the Stoics. He praises the structure of the work, noting that "the order observed by this author is very convenient, since he speaks immediately of each sect, from its beginning to its end, and before moving on to another he exhausts all the various branches which grew from

the first". Bayle points to Cozzando's positive opinions of Aristotle ("He seemed to be extremely convinced of Aristotle's merit, since he praises him to the skies") and of Epicurus ("much good is spoken of him in this work") (NRL, June 1685, art. IV, in Bayle, *Oeuvres diverses*, I, pp. 307–309). Johann Christoph Dorn referred to this review, noting that Cozzando "seems preferable to Hornius in philosophical history" (Jonsius, p. 175).

The *De magisterio* received a highly critical review, however, in the *Acta philosophorum*, where Heumann judged it a "youthful and totally immature work"; its author accumulates much material, "but without passing judgement (*ohne judicio*), and he can rightly be called the second Hornius", with the remark, however, that Hornius is superior to Cozzando in erudition. If this were not enough, Heumann also observes that it would be perfectly possible to do without Cozzando's work, and that it would not be an injustice to place it in a "catalogue of books unworthy of preservation" (*catalogus librorum deperdendorum*). The fact that Cozzando belonged to a religious order only added to the criticisms of the Lutheran Heumann: monks, he declares, "are mere compilers, and their books are re-heated dishes. Their three vows, that is to say, chastity, poverty, and obedience, also refer to their intellect, which is sterile, poor, and restricted to blind obedience" (Heumann, II, pp. 321–322). In the following pages, the reviewer explains the title of the work and sets out the contents of the individual books. Having reached the sixth and final book, he ironizes on the *Epicurus expensus* (a work which Cozzando had promised to publish), expressing the desire that it might never be printed, since it would serve no purpose; if it were to appear, it would be such a miserable thing set beside the works of Gassendi, just as viburnum bushes are insignificant compared with tall cyprus trees (cf. Vergil, *Ecl*. I, V, 19ff.).

Heumann's negative judgement was taken up by Brucker, who also added an observation made by Elswich: "Leonardo Cozzando of Brescia has followed Hornius with juvenile impetus and equal lack of success, like the blind following the blind, in his six books *De magist. antiq. Philos.*, without, however, providing the fruit of such abundant and various reading as Hornius does, since he simply copies what Hornius has gathered from others [a note here refers to "Elswich, in not. ad Launojum, *De fort. Arist*., p. 339"]: he ploughed with the same young ox but he harvested less than is necessary to shed more light on the subject he treats" (Brucker, I, p. 35). For his part, Capasso (who uses the *De magisterio* just as Valletta does) reproaches Cozzando, so quick to point out the plagarism of others ("who often accuses others of the crime of plagiarism"), with quoting the source of his information only rarely (Capasso, *Synopsis*, pp. 272–273; the remark here regards information on Chosroes, in reality taken from the *Suda Lexicon*).

Cozzando's work is a compilation built on very traditional models, and is situated in the margins of the debate which at the time animated the rise of *historia philosophica*. Comparison with Hornius is particularly significant, since the two writers were both born in the same year (1620) and both wrote – or began to write – their history of philosophy while still young. What differentiates Cozzando from Hornius is not only his relative lack of erudition, as Heumann pointed out, but above all the narrowness of his historical perspective, which is conditioned by structures

inherited from Antiquity, while his scholastic training prevented him from recognising the *philosophia nova* and the exact limits of the boundary between past ages and the modern era. Nevertheless, Heumann's slating criticism, which appeared almost 40 years after the publication of the *De magisterio* and which was strongly influenced by religious polemic, cannot be accepted in its entirety when forming a historiographical judgement, if we consider – and it is enough to think of Bayle's judgement – that Cozzando's work was not without merit and interest in the eyes of his learned contemporaries.

4.2.6. On Cozzando's life and works: BUAM, X, pp. 165–166; DBI, XXX, pp. 551–552. Cozzando himself furnishes us with a list of his own works in his *Della Libreria Bresciana* (Brescia, 1694), pp. 155 ff., which is used as a source by the AE, 1695, p. 473.

On the fortune of his works: NRL, June 1685, art. IV, in Bayle, *Oeuvres diverses*, I, pp. 307–308; Jonsius, p. 175; Heumann, II, pp. 319–326; Brucker, I, p. 36; VI, pp. 26–27; Buonafede, *Della istoria*, I, pp. xxxvii–xxxviii; Degérando, I, p. 126. Cf. also JS XIX (1691), p. 514, where Cozzando is quoted as a source in the *Extrait d'une Lettre de M. Foucher Chanoine de Dijon, à M. Lantin Conseiller au Parlement de Bourgogne, sur la question, sçavoir, si Carneades a esté contemporain d'Epicure.*

On criticism: Braun, p. 202; R. Ragghianti, *La tentazione del presente. Victor Cousin tra filosofie della storia e teorie della memoria* (Naples, 1997), p. 54.

4.3 Giuseppe Valletta (1636–1714)

Istoria filosofica

4.3.1. The author of the *Istoria filosofica* was a singular combination of businessman and man of letters. Merchant and scholar, a lawyer by profession and a lover of philosophy, an economist and a bibliophile, Giuseppe Valletta played a prominent role in the diffusion of modern European culture in Neapolitan intellectual circles of the late seventeenth century. Born in Naples on 6th October, 1636 into a humble family (his father was a tailor), after his legal and literary studies he entered the legal profession. His marriage to the widow of the rich merchant Matteo Vernassa opened the door for him to a successful career, both as a merchant and as a lawyer, making Valletta one of the most representative exponents of that "civil" class which had carved out its own social and political, but also cultural niche in the Viceroyalty of Naples, at the expense of the noble and ecclesiastical classes. Valletta combined his at times unscrupulous economic activities with a lively involvement in civic and cultural affairs, taking part in the debate on economic and monetary issues at the time of the marquis de los Velez viceroy, and attempting to introduce reforms promoted by the supporters of natural law into Neapolitan legal practice. Having accumulated substantial wealth, he retired from the legal profession around 1685, giving up any promotion to the higher magistracies in order to devote himself entirely to the "Republic of Letters". A passionate bibliophile and antiquarian, Valletta had amassed an impressive library and an art gallery for which he became famous in

learned Italian and European circles, where he established a dense network of literary correspondence, especially with Antonio Magliabechi. His library, made up of choice and rare books, was generously open to all scholars, Neapolitan and foreign, and became the principal cultural centre in the city. It was in the salons of Valletta's residence that many meetings of the re-founded *Accademia degli Investiganti* were held in the years 1683–1697. A close friend of Tommaso Cornelio, Leonardo Di Capua, and Francesco D'Andrea, Valletta was also on friendly terms with the young Vico, whom he encouraged in the publication of his *Canzone in morte di Antonio Caraffa*. Valletta also had numerous relations with intellectuals from beyond the Alps: among his correspondents was Ménage, who sent him the gift of a copy of *Le origini della lingua italiana*, identified by Zeno as one of the most valuable works in Valletta's library. In a letter to Ménage, dated 27th March, 1685, Valletta declares among other things that he has "highly" appreciated "the most careful annotation of Diogenes Laertius" (*Opere*, p. 30n.). In that same year he welcomed as his guest in Naples some of the most famous learned Europeans of the time (Jean Mabillon, Bernard de Montfaucon, the Anglican bishop Gilbert Burnet), who remember him with admiration in their works. He was later on terms with Shaftesbury, who had moved to Naples in 1711 for reasons of health, and who died there in February, 1713. Valletta was one of the few Neapolitans of the time to have a knowledge of English, and he edited the Italian and Latin translations of scientific publications from England, in particular those of the Royal Society.

Valletta's retirement did not mean his withdrawal from civic life, however. In the last decade of the seventeenth century he was directly involved in the jurisdictional and cultural controversy which arose as a result of the Papal Inquisition's trials of "atheists", where he became, together with D'Andrea and Grimaldi, the spokesman for that "philosophical freedom" which animated the Neapolitan intellectual class. In the years 1698–1702 he participated in the activities of the *Accademia Palatina*, which had been established by the viceroy duke of Medinacoeli. He became a member of the *Arcadia* in 1710, taking the academic name of "Bibliophilus Acteus", and he was also invited to join the Royal Society, but refused. In his final years he devoted himself to an assiduous reading of the Church Fathers, in particular St. Augustine. After two months of illness he died on 16th May, 1714. His heirs were not able to preserve the artistic and bibliographic patrimony which he had collected with such passion: most of the museum ended up in England, together with some of the rarer items from the library; the library itself was offered for sale in vain to Victor Amadeus II of Savoy, and was finally bought by the fathers of the Oratory, thus constituting the most important collection of the present day Girolamini Oratorian Library. The catalogue of works and an estimation of their value (over 14,000 *scudi* as a whole) were carried out by Vico.

4.3.2. Valletta's literary activity begins with a memoir on questions of monetary policy, entitled *Risposta ad amico sopra le ragioni della città di Napoli per l'assistenze domandate alla fabrica della nuova moneta*, which circulated in manuscript form (ed. in Comparato, *G. Valletta. Un intellettuale*, pp. 287–337). His *Disceptationes forenses,* three of them in Italian and three in Latin, have been dated to the

period between 1679 and 1684, but were published with no indication of date or place.

His most significant works are a series of three "writings", fruit of successive editions and re-elaborations, which reveal a progression from jurisdictional to philosophical and historico-philosophical themes. The series begins with a manuscript memoir addressed to pope Innocent XII, *Intorno al procedimento ordinario e canonico nelle cause che si trattano nel Tribunale del Santo Officio nella città e nel Regno di Napoli*, which Valletta was invited to draw up as early as 1691 in defence of the city of Naple's privilege of exemption from the Papal Inquisition. In this work the juridical arguments are accompanied by a historical *excursus* on the Inquisition, revealing that sensitivity to the historical approach which was to receive its most complete expression in the *Istoria filosofica*. The controversy over the Inquisition went far beyond merely juridical and political issues and involved the entire Neapolitan intellectual class, accused by the ecclesiastical authorities of favouring libertinism and atheism. To the same extent as other proponents of the new Cartesian and atomist philosophy like Lucantonio Porzio and Leonardo Di Capua, Valletta was probably also among the targets of the anti-modern campaign of the Jesuit De Benedictis (see above, Introduction). Valletta was well aware of the philosophical implications of a conflict which set the city of Naples against the Inquisition, and in the first redaction of his memoir on the Inquisition, he made sure of inserting a digression in which modern philosophy is defended against Peripateticism. This insert was subsequently developed and it came to take on the form of a work in its own right, it too in the form of a letter dedicated to Innocent XII: *Discorso filosofico in materia d'Inquisizione, et intorno al correggimento della filosofia di Aristotele*, which in some manuscripts bears the dates 1696 and 1697. This work was edited posthumously by Girolamo Tartarotti in Rovereto in 1732, on the suggestion of Muratori, with its title altered: *Lettera del Signor Giuseppe Valletta Napoletano in difesa della moderna filosofia, e de' coltivatori di essa, indirizzata alla Santità di Clemente XI. Aggiuntavi in fine un'osservazione sopra la medesima* (Rovereto: printed by Pierantonio Berno, 1732), 221 pages; new ed., with variants taken from the manuscript tradition, in G. Valletta, *Opere filosofiche*, ed. M. Rak (Florence, 1975), pp. 75–215 (for an analysis of the *Lettera*, cf. in particular Garin, *Dal Rinascimento*, pp. 208–215).

The new "writing" underwent a further evolution under the impetus of the new cultural atmosphere: once the controversy over the Inquisition had been resolved, Valletta restructured his work, accentuating its historical form, its original Cartesian inspiration giving way to an exaltation of Gassendi's atomism. Thus the *Istoria filosofica* was born, a work which begins in the same way as the *Discorso filosofico* (indeed several scholars, even recently, have confused the two), but which very soon diverges from the latter in its adherence to the models of philosophical historiography. In a letter to Magliabechi dated 7th January, 1704, Valletta refers to the publication of the *Istoria* against his will, initiated by someone no better identified than as a "Frenchman". This was a clandestine publication which was interrupted, and only five exemplars have been traced (three in Naples, one in Bologna, and one in Trento), which differ from one another in the number of their pages (from 208 to

240) and which bear no original indication of the author, the title of the work, or the date and place of publication. The titles given in these copies (*Historia filosofica*, *Historia della filosofia corpuscolare*, *Storia della filosofia*) are the result of latter handwritten additions, while in the letter to Magliabechi the work is indicated with the general title of *Filosofia*. Given the fact that the original manuscript has not been found, here, following Rak, we have used "an Italian title – *Istoria filosofica* – whose Latinized tone was reduced to a minimum and which was at least partially authorized by the manuscript tradition" (*Opere*, p. 435). Rak has edited the modern edition of the *Istoria filosofica*, which includes an excellent *Nota storico-filologica* and an index of names and sources (*Opere*, pp. 217–386; 431–619).

Among Valletta's minor works it is worth pointing out several lessons for the *Accademia di Medinacoeli* which include a discussion of the philosophy of the ancient Persians (see above, Introduction). Valletta's correspondence was dispersed; there remain however the letters which he sent to Magliabechi, of particular importance for the history of the book trade in Italy in the years between 1681 and 1704.

4.3.3. In the address to Innocent XII which opens the *Lettera in difesa della moderna filosofia*, and which is repeated in virtually the same words in the *Istoria filosofica*, Valletta touches on the genesis of these two parallel "writings" and makes a clear statement of his theoretical orientation and the manner of his recourse to a historical format. Referring to his previous letter on the Inquisition, the Neapolitan lawyer observes that the profound reasons for the conflict were not of a juridical, but a philosophical and cultural nature, forcing him to develop the question further in that direction: "Thus, when I thought I had already completed all the work, I still desired to investigate the cause and the origin of the movements and the turmoil which have taken place in our City because of this trial by the Inquisition: and suddenly I knew and I clearly saw that it had been none other than a certain jealousy, so to speak, of Schools, directed against a certain Philosophy, commonly called Modern, although it is most ancient and professed by the best and the wisest Men of our City" (*Lettera*, in *Opere*, pp. 77–78; *Istoria filosofica*, in *Opere*, p. 219). The opposition to the spread of modern philosophy and the "jealously of Schools" (in other words, the reaction of the ecclesiastical cultural and educational apparatus – in particular that of the Jesuits – which saw the emerging "civil class" escape its control) were therefore the true causes of the jurisdictional conflict which set the city of Naples against the Inquisition. And it is precisely "in the defence, both of the life and the reputation, of our Citizens" that Valletta entered the fray again, with "a long discourse in order to reveal once and for all and to make a clearer testimony to the World regarding the impiety of Aristotelian Philosophy, and the equal innocence of this other [Philosophy] which they call Modern. Others", continues the author, critical of the Neapolitan intelligentsia, "could have easily undertaken it upon themselves to manifest such a truth, instead of lazily remaining so inactive in a public case of such importance in which we are maliciously accused, some of us as Heretics, others as Atheists, depending on the anger and the ignorance of the Preachers of Peripateticism; indeed, there are many experts on this new Philosophy

who have learnt it better and more profoundly than I have" (*Lettera*, p. 78; *Istoria filosofica*, pp. 219–220).

Valletta shows himself to be particularly sensitive to the civic function of knowledge, and, with a reference to Cicero, he declares that "it is not enough for each one of us, after long vigils and hardships, to understand the truth; but it is surely necessary to instruct all the others in it, who unfortunately have miserably fallen into the prejudices of the 'Barbarian' Schools, and have not within themselves the strength to pull themselves up from the dung-heap". For Valletta, this militant commitment takes the form of the historical essay, which he contrasts to the vain *disputatio* of the scholastic tradition, within the context of a pedagogical concept of history, which is linked back through humanism to the Ciceronian model: "Leaving the dispute aside, therefore, from which Truth always flies, by opposing reasons with reasons, arguments with arguments, and sometimes sophisms with sophisms, and with perpetual quarrels and disputes, [. . .] after long deliberation, I have chosen the *historical part*, 'in which it is permitted to put forward arguments, but not to argue'. Since History is the Mistress of life and of times and customs, as Cicero himself writes, the most honest cause and the Rights of this Philosophy, most iniquitously insulted by the crowd of Peripatetics, may very well appear more honest and may well be defended more successfully before Your Holiness" (*Lettera*, p. 79; *Istoria filosofica*, p. 220).

The historical approach, common to both the *Lettera in difesa della moderna filosofia* and the *Istoria filosofica*, is further stressed in the latter, which contains the significant remark: "And in the end I will make sure that History obeys and profits Philosophy, in such a way that she can say, with greater reason than at the end of the Dialogue by Theophylact Simocatta, [. . .] 'I will obey, therefore, o Queen, and I will play the lyre of History [. . .]'" (*Istoria filosofica*, pp. 220–221). It is also stressed in the course of the discussion: in praising the doctrines of Gassendi, Valletta notes that "it would indeed be highly presumptuous to wish to repeat here, even partially, what he himself [= Gassendi] has written, and so much the more because this present writing, which pertains purely to the historical part, does not require it" (*Istoria filosofica*, p. 271). In Valletta, the choice of the "historical part" (which in the second part of the two "writings" in question takes on the structure of the genre of the history of philosophy) is not to be attributed, therefore, to some erudite or didactic or populist end, but serves, rather, a precise theoretical function (the defence of modern philosophy and criticism of Aristotelianism), connected in turn – on an ideological and civic level – to the "defence, both of the life and of the reputation" of the Neapolitan intellectuals "maliciously accused" of heresy and atheism.

The concept of "philosophy" which underpins Valletta's position is illustrated in the second part of the introduction. Replying to the accusations which considered modern philosophy "harmful to our Holy Faith, because it is removed from the principles of Aristotle", the Neapolitan lawyer distinguishes between a correct and praiseworthy use of philosophy, understood as an investigation limited to natural things, and the abuse which derives from mixing philosophy and theology or from philosophy's infringements into the field of theology. The discussion is developed with the aid of numerous *auctoritates*, both pagan and Christian (from Cicero, Varro,

Gellius, Pliny the Younger, and Simplicius, to Athenagoras, Lactantius, Clement of Alexandria, Gregory Nazianzenus, and cardinal Sforza Pallavicino), culminating in a passage from Augustine from which it follows that one must avoid "those Philosophers who, confiding in the simple lights and principles of their Philosophy, set themselves to fabricating conjectures on divine things which surpass human understanding". It is from such premises that Valletta goes on to claim the right to free philosophical research, not tied to a single – here, Peripatetic – school: "Following on from this, I wish to ask, most blessed Father, leaving to one side those things concerning Theology, who can deny men of sound mind the freedom to philosophize?" (*Istoria filosofica*, pp. 222–223).

In the introduction there is no reference to the content of "modern philosophy", that is to say Atomism, which is, however, precisely defined in the course of the discussion. In harmony with the principles set out above, the author conceives of this "Philosophy of Atoms, which is currently called Corpuscular by the most learned Englishmen", as a strictly physical theory, devoid of implications of a theological nature, and methodologically more valid than scholastic Aristotelianism, "since it teaches none other than that all the things subject to generation and corruption are composed of the most minute particles, physically indivisible, and different amongst themselves only in their movement, size, and shape. From the composition, transposition, and dissolution of these alone, and from the diversity of their shape and movement, is born everything which in nature we say to be generated and corrupted. [. . .] Indeed everything can conveniently be explained by the similarity of the particles and the shape of the pores, more or less suited to receiving these particles, and again by their various movement, without the need to resort to the Anchor of the ignorant, that is to say, to those vain, meaningless words, of occult sympathy and quality, with which the Aristotelians satisfy themselves, 'Treating the shadows as something solid'" (*Istoria filosofica*, pp. 261 and 268–270; for Valletta's theoretical position see also *Lettera*, p. 159, where the "reciprocal contrasts" of the "Physicists" and the "Metaphysicists" are recorded in relation to the constitutive principles of nature. As far as the quotation from Dante is concerned, "Treating the shadows as something solid", it had already been used by Carlo Buragna in the introduction to the second edition of his *Parere* on the unreliability of the medicine of Leonardo Di Capua, which appeared in 1689: cf. Garin, p. 869).

4.3.4. *Istoria filosofica*

4.3.4.1. In the original edition, the text of the *Istoria filosofica* lacks any internal subdivisions and bibliographical notes. In Rak's edition (which includes the original pagination in the margin) the work is divided for convenience into 19 chapters and the preface addressed to Innocent XII (pp. 219–221), with the titles in italics in square brackets: Chapter I: "Philosophy", pp. 221–224; II: "The tradition of modern philosophy", p. 224 (a series of brief considerations which function as a link between the introduction and the historical discussion); III: "Italic philosophy", pp. 224–231; IV: "Democritus", pp. 231–239; V: "Epicurus", pp. 239–255; VI: "The Atomist philosophy of Wisdom", pp. 255–261; VII: "Corpuscular philosophy", pp. 261–288; VIII: "The Epicureans", pp. 288–292; IX: "Plato and

the Platonic tradition", pp. 292–305; X: "The tradition of Aristotelianism and heresy", pp. 305–331; XI: "Arabic philosophy", pp. 331–340; XII: "System and tradition of Dialectic", pp. 340–354; XIII: "Scholasticism", pp. 354–360; XIV: "First Scholasticism", pp. 360–361; XV: "Second Scholasticism", pp. 361–362; XVI: "Third Scholasticism", pp. 362–364; XVII: "Fourth Scholasticism", pp. 364–365; XVIII: "The scholastic method", pp. 365–373; XIX: "Philosophizing properly", pp. 373–386; this final chapter breaks off in the middle of a quotation from Robert Fludd.

4.3.4.2. Valletta presents his outline of the development of ancient thought in a historical digression inserted into his initial considerations in defence of philosophy. Philosophy was "transmitted from Adam to his Descendants up to Noah and, after the Flood and the division of peoples, it was learnt by the Ancient Egyptians, and taught by them not only to the Hebrews, from whom it spread to the Persians, the Chaldaeans, and the Phoenicians, but also, through Orpheus, to the Greeks, from where the Romans drew their wisdom" (*Istoria filosofica*, p. 221; this digression is missing in the *Lettera*; for a complete overview of the sects and the philosophers quoted in the *Istoria filosofica*, from Adam up to modern thought, cf. Rak, pp. 32–35, note 15). After a reference to the distinction between Ionian and Italic philosophy, Valletta dwells on the latter and identifies it with the atomistic tradition, which, starting with Pythagoras, and moving through the Pythagoreans, Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno of Elea, Leucippus, Democritus, and Epicurus, also includes Plato and his followers up to the Renaissance.

In opposition to this tradition is the school of Aristoteles, which extends into Arabic philosophy and Scholasticism. Scholasticism is divided into four ages and as many "schools" or "sects". It is not clear from the text what the limits of the first age are: the author notes that the Scholasticism of Peter Lombard lasted until the thirteenth century and that the School of Albert the Great "flowered for the space of a good hundred years up to Durand"; this is followed by the "fourth age", from Durand to Gabriel Biel. The first of the four schools is similarly left undefined: it is not clear whether it is constituted by the Nominalists (quoted in a longer list of "sects") or whether it is confused with the "Scholasticism of Peter Lombard" (*Istoria filosofica*, pp. 357–365; Rak's periodization does not seem to take into account the distinction between "ages" and "schools"). The discussion closes on the eve of modern thought; the work as a whole, however, is not lacking in references to and judgements on some of the philosophers of the seventeenth century.

4.3.4.3. The *Istoria filosofica* is based on two fundamental historiographical assumptions, which are present from the introductory pages onwards: philosophy "commonly named Modern" is in reality "most ancient" and is in no way prejudicial to the Christian faith, while the impious doctrines of Aristotle and his followers are at the root of heresies, ancient and recent, and the degeneration both of Scholastics and of several modern philosophers. The entire discussion is therefore constructed on the antagonism between two opposing philosophical traditions, the "corpuscular" or atomistic (which is stretched well beyond the confines of the atomism

of Democritus and Epicurus) and the Aristotelian, it too broadened to encompass all that is negative in the development of philosophical and theological thought. Initially, the atomistic tradition is made to derive from Pythagoras and Italic philosophy. Indeed Pythagoras is placed among the Italic philosophers, since, "although he was believed by some to come from Samos in Greece, by others nevertheless he is held to be Italian, from Samo, a City of our Calabria, which is now called 'Crepacori' in vernacular" (p. 225). However, Valletta also quotes the sources which demonstrate how Pythagoras took his doctrine from Moses and imitated the Essenes in his formulation of the norms of behaviour. In his presentation of Pythagoras there is no hint of the doctrines which – besides the traditional scheme of the succession of "Italic" philosophers – would make him the true initiator of atomism. This topic is dealt with further on, in the digression on "corpuscular philosophy", which responds to the objection that Pythagoras had "philosophized according to numbers, and their proportions and properties, and not according to the shape and the indivisibility of Atoms". Valletta observes that there is little difference between the atoms of Democritus and Epicurus and the "units" of Pythagoras, which come down to the same thing, and he quotes in his defence Ecfantus and Book II of Cicero's *De anima*, where "units" are identified with "corpuscles". "Besides this", insists the author, "it was an old conviction of the Pythagoreans that the body contains in act infinite parts, distinct from one another, into which it can be divided *ad infinitum*: hence, according to Ficinus, they called the body an 'infinite multitude of parts', that is to say the same as units" (p. 262).

After Pythagoras and his followers, the line of succession of atomistic philosophy has its greatest exponents in Democritus and Epicurus, whom Valletta treats in an apologetic and eulogistic fashion with the aim of forestalling the traditional accusations of irreligion or at least of an alienation from the Christian perspective. He stresses Democritus's scientific interests, which led him to study "Chemistry" and astronomy: he "investigated nature, and the movements of the stars, and was the first to say that there were not only seven planets, which today's Astrologers [*sic*] boast of as if it were some great discovery", and moreover he studied "all the virtues of plants and stones" (*Istoria filosofica*, p. 232; cf. Rak, p. 51, who observes that "this was indirectly the model of the Neapolitan intellectual of the time and the archetype of his system of knowledge"). Like Marsili before him, Valletta lays great emphasis on the "continual Panegyric of Democritus" in Book I of Aristotle's *De generatione*; he also stresses Democritus's moral qualities and maintains – on the basis of Gravius' *Historia philosophica* – that Democritus never denied Providence, but rather recognised and defended "the immortality of the souls and the future resurrection of the bodies, as Laertius reports". Onto this positive stock Valletta grafts a reference to Democritus's speculative and methodological position, clearly alluding to the Neapolitan controversy between atomists and peripatetics: "Besides this – banning the fantastic dreams of other Philosophers, and abhorring those magnificent words and those unheard of concepts and those bare names of occult qualities, of sympathy and Magnetism – he turned (on the testimony of Aristotle himself in the book of Metaphysics) to explaining the real effects of nature with the real shapes and particular movements of Atoms". Democritus laid down two principles:

"Vacuum, otherwise called Rarity and non-Being" and "Fullness, which is a dense and solid being, formed of infinite Atoms, that is to say indivisible little particles knotted together. [. . .] Nor would Aristotle himself be far from this", insists the author, almost as if he wished to rob the peripatetics of their founder, "if we would only regard what he said in the first book of the Physics: 'Every thing is made of indivisibles'" (*Istoria filosofica*, p. 234).

As far as chance is concerned, which according to Democritus is what governs the world, it is not in contrast with the Christian view of providence. Valletta believes he "can affirm, without any doubt, that when Democritus says 'things are made by chance', he means Fate. And by Fate he meant the order of causes established by Providence and by the Author of Nature, which he called Necessity", as can be gathered from the testimony of Galen and Plutarch. On the other hand (and here Valletta refers to Magnen's *Democritus reviviscens*), the atomistic theory does not contradict the principle of divine creation. Broadening his consensual vision to include all "philosophizers" (*filosofanti*) and poets of ancient Greece, Valletta observes that they did not cast doubt on the existence of a creator and provident God: if some of them were considered atheists, this was "because they scoffed at Idols, not because they actually denied there was a God". Democritus and Epicurus, Valletta insists, simply affirmed that the world was made up of atoms, and in no way meant to attribute to chance either the products of human genius, such as architecture or literature, or "the marvellous effects of wise Nature", fruit of "symmetry and mastery", in such a way that "we never see a pear tree produce sweet figs, or a fig tree tasty pears", and water, once reduced to a vapour, re-acquires its previous state when cooled, and not some other (pp. 234–238).

Valletta devotes even more care to re-creating a positive image of Epicurus. After several remarks of a biographical nature, which include among other things a comparison to Abraham ("Resembling not so much Democritus as Abraham who held his Academy in a Wood of Beersheba, he chose a garden for his school"), the author enters immediately *in medias res* by bringing forth a series of testimonies from which it emerges that Epicurus taught the existence of a purely spiritual and incorporeal God, who was moreover provident, constant, just, and good. What is more, Epicurus "considered the Soul to be a substance and an unnamed and immortal Being, by which man resembles God"; although he posited the pre-existence of matter, he denied the eternity of the world (and Bacon is cited here), "in which in truth it appears that he came rather close to the dictates of Divine Scripture, as long as we are ready to consider, according to the literal sense, unformed matter before the work of the six days, without distinction of time" (p. 243). Moving on to Epicurus's moral doctrines, Valletta notes that the "voluptuousness" of which he speaks is none other than "the imperturbable serenity of the mind and the continuous control of the passions" which he brought about by means of a "life of austerity and suffering". To combat the unjust disparagement of this philosopher Valletta brings to bear numerous testimonies from ancient and modern authors, from Cicero and Seneca to Petrarch, Ambrose and Augustine, G.B. Guarini, Marc'Antonio Bonciario, La Mothe Le Vayer, Jacques du Rondel, and Francisco Quevedo, as well as Gassendi naturally. In the field of physics, Valletta continues, Epicurus clarified the doctrines

of Democritus, "in the sense that where [Democritus] said that Atoms were spirited and animated, [Epicurus] simply taught that they were principles of corporeal things". Both maintained that God had created atoms and "impressed on them movement, extension, and shape". The fact, then, that these atoms "last forever despite the corruptions and transformations of one thing into another, must certainly not seem stranger than prime matter imagined to be eternal by the Aristotelians"; nor does Atomism constitute a threat to the dignity of the soul, since, unlike the body, it is "stripped of weight and corporeal quantity, and is absolutely simple". With this vindication of Epicurus – which goes as far as to make him a sort of Christian *ante litteram*, he "who in the darkness of Paganism, which was at that time absolutely blind, was more able than any other to know God and his Providence, the Immortality of the Soul, and the perfection of living" – Valletta's presentation of classical atomism, developed within the succession of Italic philosophers, comes to an end. At this point, to banish any remaining hint of unorthodoxy, the author thinks it wise to dwell on a more distinct examination "of these Atoms, or corpuscles, which have given such a fright to some, as if they were ferocious Elephants or Giants of Phlegra" (pp. 254–255).

Valletta notes first of all "that, if one wishes to reason correctly, the inventor of this Philosophy of Atoms was not in truth Epicurus, nor Democritus, Leucippus, nor even Anaxagoras, but rather Mochus, great Phoenician Philosopher and Historian", whose philosophy was none other than a "Physiological History, or rather, a Natural History of the Creation of the World". He believes that the identification of Mochus with Moses, put forward by many famous writers, is "not rash", and declares in any case that "even if one does not want to believe it, at least it cannot be denied that Mochus, whose name is Jewish, had taken it from the doctrine of Moses" (pp. 255–260). The reference to the mythical figure of Mochus thus allows Valletta to salvage pre-Greek thought which he seemed to have disposed of in the brief remark of p. 211. The theme of the most ancient origins of corpuscular philosophy (which Valletta took straight from the English Neoplatonists) is discussed again later in a lengthy digression, in which the author states it as "clear" that "whether we call them Atoms or dust, or sand with Hermes, or seeds with Lucretius, [. . .] it cannot be denied that no other type of philosophizing was spoken of until MMMDXL year afters the beginning of the world, and that Aristotle was the first [. . .], according to Clement of Alexandria, to introduce the Peripatetic sect, contrary to common sense and to all the sages who had come before him, whose opinions he tried with all his might to destroy". Valletta firmly stresses moreover the derivation of atomism from Moses, considering it a philosophy consecrated by virtue of its direct foundation on Scripture, and he pauses to analyse the text of Genesis: the "fine dust" is made to correspond to atoms, and the "waters" which the spirit of God moved upon are understood as "a multitude of small particles agitated by an uncertain movement", that is "an infinite mass of confused matter", since "the true waters had not yet been created or rather separated by God, but only on the third day was the Earth called arid and dry, and the congregation of the waters Sea". He is convinced that an atomistic reading of creation is sanctioned by the fact that all the early Greek philosophers upheld principles identical or analogous to those of atomism: "The

greatest proof, however, that Moses had spoken in the sense we have put forward is that the first sages who appeared in Greece after that also philosophized according to these principles, that is to say Atoms, or seeds or imperceptible corpuscles. In fact, since it is absolutely certain that these sages learned all the sciences principally from the Hebrews, it is also very likely that they adapted themselves to their principles and in the way taught by their Prophets" (pp. 282–283).

The hypothesis of the derivation of every form of knowledge from the Hebrews, therefore, is taken for granted and is not considered in need of any historical or critical verification. In a diametrically opposite way to that set out in the same period by Bayle in his *Dictionnaire*, this hypothesis indeed can function as the basis for deducing the existence of a substantial agreement between Scripture and the physical doctrines of the early Greek thinkers. Besides the Cambridge Platonists, Valletta also refers here to renaissance authors, quoting in particular Steuco's "noble and learned treatise". "Who was it", he insists, "who taught Hesiod, that most ancient Poet, to sing a whole poem on the creation of the World if not Moses?". Moses inspired Thales, Pherecydes of Syros, and Empedocles, as well as the Druids, the Brahmans, the Arabs, and the Phoenicians, in affirming that water is the principle of all things. From Moses Anaxagoras learned that the Sky is the true home of man; from him Plato and Timaeus derived their "knowledge of the creation of the World and the immortality of the soul". Even Democritus drew his doctrine "from the same source of Mosaic Wisdom" (pp. 283–286; see also pp. 327–328, where, following Clement of Alexandria, Valletta reaffirms the thesis of the universal consensus of ancient peoples on the existence of God "creator and regulator of the World").

Having placed the beginning of the historical development of corpuscular philosophy in Scripture, Valletta freely proceeds to an "annexation" of most of the Greek and Roman philosophers and even the Fathers and Doctors of the Church to the doctrine of atomism, understood in its widest sense and in opposition to the Aristotelian doctrine of prime matter. Thus treated are Empedocles and Heraclitus (who spoke of "certain tiny and indivisible particles"), Artemidorus, Arcesilaus, Bithynius, Heraclides Ponticus, and Metrodorus among the Greeks, Lucretius, Cicero, Horace and Virgil, Seneca ("no less a Stoic than an Epicurean"), and the emperor Marcus Aurelius, among the Latins. That matter was composed of "particles" was openly recognised, Valletta claims, by St. Basil, St. Augustine, Athenagoras, and other Fathers, and then by St. Bernard and Aquinas himself, who states that "Fiery particles, which exist in the air are carried to earth by the rains". St. Gregory of Nyssa in particular was a "great follower and defender of this Philosophy" and was apparently inspired by St. Paul, who in turn was influenced by a passage from the book of Wisdom which had been interpreted by some contemporary scholars in an atomistic sense (pp. 272–273; on the "technique of mystification" used by Valletta to demonstrate Patristic atomism cf. Rak's analysis, pp. 55–58).

The review of corpuscular philosophy (which is inserted into the text in the form of an apologetic and explanatory digression, interrupting the ordered progression which is based on the usual historiographical models), also includes numerous modern authors, who in some way adhered to atomism or who at least recognised its

validity. Besides the "incomparable" Gassendi and Bacon, many minor writers of the seventeenth century are included, from Isacco Cardoso to Francesco Aquilonio, G. B. Ivanini, Isaac Zabanius, and Adrian Heereboord, as well as Du Hamel, who "in the book of the Agreement of old and new Philosophy, could not, even though he was a Peripatatic, abstain from confessing that the Philosophy of Epicurus was more suitable to the true Philosopher than any other" (*Istoria filosofica*, p. 268). Valletta also quotes many Jesuits, such as Francesco Lana, Niccolò Cabeo, and François Titelmans, with the evident intention of embarrassing his adversaries. However, he condemns the attitude of another Jesuit, Nicolas Caussin, because he had refused to condemn the theory of the plurality of worlds, and observes with subtle malice, that such an attitude "could, if nothing else, give rise to the calumny of saying that he might have approved of the execrable doctrine of Giordano Bruno, which, Heaven willed to have been incinerated in the most righteous flames in which its Author burnt, and not continue to live in his abominable book written on the plurality of worlds. With ideas which no one has since heard of, unearthing the most extravagant opinions of the Greeks, the Chaldaeans, and the Ancient Egyptians, opinions buried once and for all, Bruno created a new and unheard of system, where he gives clear proof of human daring and the freedom to think everything possible as well as to write down everything that can be thought". Valletta pauses for a moment to illustrate Bruno's concept of cosmology and quotes a lengthy passage from that "wicked" philosopher, allowing us to glimpse, beneath his verbal condemnation, an interest in the doctrines of the heretic Bruno and his defence of philosophical freedom (*Istoria filosofica*, p. 279; cf. Rak, pp. 58–60, where the latent ambiguity in this and other positions held by Valletta are explained in terms of "erudite libertinism").

In analysing the digression on corpuscular philosophy we have deliberately omitted references to Plato, since he is the subject of a chapter in his own right. In fact Plato occupies a fundamental place in Valletta's work, since his alleged adherence to corpuscular philosophy not only reinforces and ennobles the atomistic tradition, but also extends it, thanks to the derivatives of Platonism, up to the dawn of the modern age, when it is welded with newly-discovered classical atomism. Only Plato, historical antagonist of Aristotle, was able to supply the prestige needed to oppose the Peripatetic line-up, given that even Descartes, as we will see, is made to depend on the Athenian philosopher. Moreover, Plato's thought is in greater "conformity" with Christianity, according to the traditional judgement of the Fathers, and as such it can put flight once and for all to any doubt as to the orthodoxy of atomism itself. Plato naturally is placed among the atomists too: "he drank of the milk of Wisdom from the same sources as Democritus and Epicurus", he was a "follower, enamoured" of Pythagoras, and, "with Xenocrates called atoms 'Greatnesses', that is to say, indivisible quantities" (*Istoria filosofica*, pp. 261 and 292). This Greek philosopher is extolled as he who "exceeded all other philosophers" and who came closest of all to Christian truth: his thought in fact derived from Moses and the Prophets, indeed – as Giovanni Pico della Mirandola stated – he translated Mosaic law "from Egyptian into the Greek tongue".

At this point the discussion turns to the "diversity of Dogmas" between Plato and Aristotle; referring to the renaissance Platonists (and in particular to Patrizi),

Valletta contrasts a series of Platonic doctrines "all consistent with our Faith", with as many Aristotelian ones on God, the world, and the human soul (*Istoria filosofica*, pp. 297–300; cf. *Lettera*, pp. 93–95, where the "discordances" between the two philosophers are grouped into 25 paragraphs). He also touches on the revival of Platonic philosophy in the wake of the "decline of the Empire of the East" and the flight of the most learned Greeks to Italy. In the steps of these men there followed the "greatest Italian geniuses", particularly the Florentines (Ficinus is said to have recalled "from Hell the true Euridice, that is, the wisdom of Plato"). In this outline of the history of Platonism the most interesting element consists of Valletta's establishment of links of derivation between the ancient Greek philosopher and modern science: "Besides this, in Physical things, the amount of light Plato has given our modern philosophizers can be perceived in particular with Descartes, and his theory of the subtle matter poured from the Sun and the Stars and spread through all parts of the world, which is the cause of all motion, which was called by Plato sometimes 'Soul of the World', and sometimes 'fire'. On the Nature of light, he said furthermore that it was nothing but a flame alight in a greater space, exactly as the Moderns have affirmed. Whence, I ask, if not from Plato's *Timaeus*, did Boyle and others learn that colours are determined by a little flame or a light coming from outside in a certain way, reflecting and refracting on the superficial parts of a body, from which the various colours derive?" It is from *Timaeus* that Thomas Willis apparently learnt the functions of blood, and Sarpi and then Harvey derived the idea of the circulation of the blood; we are also indebted to Plato for useful information on the "cause of diseases" and on medicines, and the list goes on (the author refers here to Samuel Parker's work, *Platonik Philosophie*). After stressing that Plato too adhered to corpuscolar theory, Valletta summarizes his view of the history of philosophy by stating that Plato's doctrines derived "from the pure sources of Pythagoras, Epicurus, and Democritus, common Masters", and were then transmitted – as Lactantius writes – "to the rivulets of the Stoics and the Peripatetics", who however "then ungratefully distanced themselves greatly from the views of Plato" (pp. 303–305).

In opposition to this atomistic Platonic tradition, fully compatible with Christian orthodoxy, Valletta presents Aristotelianism as "the only cause, indeed the true origin" of all the most varied heresies to have followed on in succession from the beginning of Christianity to the modern age. Combining critical remarks made by the Church Fathers and the polemical attacks of the renaissance opponents of Aristotelianism (such as Patrizi, Campanella, and above all Petrus Ramus, the subject of a lengthy digression), Valletta reels off a long list of heretics influenced by Aristotle, beginning with Simon Magus. The list includes among others Ammonius Saccas, Porphyrius, Origen (who was not only the first of the Greek Fathers, but also the first who, "wishing to accompany Christian doctrine with the Philosophy of Aristotle, fell into many most grave errors", such as the pre-existence of souls with respect to the world), the Arians, the Manicheans, and the Donatists, to name but a few. Among the medieval philosophers we find Scotus Eriugena (who began to introduce the method of the dispute into theology), Simon of Tournai, David of Dinant, Amalric, Roscelin, Abelard, and all the supporters of dialectic; also included in the list is Meister Eckhart (on the basis of a statement by Trithemius), Wycliff

(who "impiously maintained that the Philosophy of Aristotle was absolutely necessary to interpret the Old and the New Testament"), as well as Jerome of Prague and Huss. In this way, modern heretics – Protestants that is – are also subsumed under the category of supporters of Aristotelian dialectic: not only Melanchthon and Caspar Peucer, but even Luther (!), who "as soon as he had reached his twenties became the famous Master of Dialectic at the University of Wittenberg"; and, what is more, "did the miserable Socinians not end up in a worse and more detestable Heresy because of the same dialectic?". The line-up of Peripatetics includes Vernia, Guillaume Postel, Porzio, Cremonini, M.A. De Dominis, Miguel Servet, and Cardano, Cesalpino, and Claude Guillermet de Bérigard, who, Valletta notes, ended up by taking the Stagirite's side, "even though at first sight it seems that he places the Philosophy of Aristotle in conflict with that of other ancient Philosophers writing in the form of the dialogue". To these Valletta adds Giulio Cesare Vanini, "the wickedest man in the World", who had the courage to call "his Aristotle the God and the Sovereign Pontiff of Philosophy, nature Queen and Goddess, and himself a Prophet" (pp. 305–323).

Of particular interest regarding his interpretation of philosophers is his assimilation into Aristotelianism (understood, in its widest and most negative sense, as impiety and atheism) of three modern thinkers who Valletta, on the basis of Christian Kortholt's *De tribus impostoribus magnis liber* (1680), defines as "the three great imposters": the "most impious" Edward Herbert of Cherbury, Thomas Hobbes, and Spinoza. Herbert, initiator of English Platonism and deism (whose works *De causis errorum* and *De veritate* are mentioned; Valletta's library contained a copy of the latter) is presented as he who "with his terms Universals, Possibles, and Falsities, knew no other God than Nature", which led him to be considered "the Prince of the Naturalists". Moreover, he "denied the immortality of the Soul with the principles of Aristotle, and scoffing at Moses, the Prophets, and the Apostles in such a way that, like the ancient Pagans, he desired the fall of the Christian Religion, which he said depended on authority and not on the Holy Scripture". Analogous "vanity and pride of spirit" is denounced in Hobbes, defined, following Rapin, as "at times a Peripatetic and at times an Epicurean". This "promoter of Atheism" chose what was worst amongst the ancient philosophers, such as the doctrine of the corporeality of God (from Aristotle) and the principle of egoism (from the "false Epicureans"). His doctrines on political philosophy are judged to be "the strangest of nonsense, for instance when he says that by nature there is not society but discord among men, that men are born like mushrooms (Lucretius at least likened them to cicadas), without them having any duties towards their parents, that there is in reality neither good nor evil, but that these names are merely given by law when this is established by the Prince and the City, which are said to be the source of supreme power also in the field of Religion". Placed next to Hobbes is "another monster of Aristotelian impiety", Spinoza, "a Jew by birth, but an Atheist by profession", whom Valletta is quick to set well apart from the followers of Cartesianism, in order to prevent any possible objection. Indeed he puts forward the hypothesis that Spinoza's *Renati Cartesii principia philosophiae* belongs to a period in which he was not yet "tainted by such a plague", or that it should be considered as a course of lessons drawn up

for a pupil, without Spinoza ever having been a follower of Descartes. Valletta also offers a summary of Spinoza's theological and political ideas, seeking a link, albeit superficial and forced, with the Aristotelian tradition: "So as not to do something unworthy of the school of Aristotle, he denied God and his Providence, the immortality of the Soul, Revelations, the Prophets, Devils, and Hell. And he also said that there was no other life than this mortal one of ours, without any hope of reward or fear of punishment after death. And he stated therefore that it was permissible for anyone to fulfil any desire, and that according to the state of Nature every man can make himself Master of any other man, and can use any violence and trickery, and that every man is obliged to obey only what is commanded by the law of the City because it is the prerogative of the City to establish what is just and unjust, pious or impious, according to the ideas of Hobbes (although with another method) and the Baron Herbert [of Cherbury], which we have already mentioned" (pp. 325–326). In opposition to these blasphemous doctrines Valletta feels the need to "wander again through the vast field of ancient Authors", to demonstrate how these authors were all imbued with the idea of a creator and provident God and an immortal soul. In this way he again stresses the theme of a universal consensus, which embraces not only the Greek sects foreign to Aristotelianism but also "the whole host of Barbarian, Greek, and Roman Philosophers". Aristotle himself is said to have denied those fundamental truths not because he did not possess them within himself, but because he wanted to demonstrate that they did not exist, in order to give free reign to his "dishonest and deformed way of living" (p. 329).

The history of the Aristotelian tradition is not unitary, since Valletta juxtaposes two different lines of development: beside a series of heretics to have issued from Peripateticism – a model inspired by the genre of the history of heresy – he offers the idea typically present in works on the history of philosophy of the transmission of Aristotelianism to the Arabs and from them on to Scholasticism. It is possible, however, to discern a certain link between these two lines, in so far as the heretic Sergius of Rēsh´āina "most perfidious Master of the impious Mohammad, according to Pico della Mirandola, derived his wicked doctrine from Pelagianism, that is, from Aristotelianism" (p. 331). Valletta pauses to examine the impious doctrines of Averroes and Avicenna, the two "duumvirs of Arabic superstition", and then al-Ghazzālī, al-Kindī, and Maimonides, all the object of his criticism. Taking a broader view, he also considers as followers of Aristotle "those few Mahometans who still today partially apply themselves to the sciences", as well as the Japanese, who "do not hesitate in worshipping as God prime matter, known as *Applis* in their language, something they learnt from the Manichaeans". These doctrines are likened to those of other oriental writers, among whom the "most ancient Philosopher Confucius, who came much earlier than the time of Aristotle, according to the Chinese Chronology" (p. 338). Valletta does not move on to Scholasticism immediately, preferring first to amass another series of *auctoritates* critical of Aristotle, as if he were trying to prepare the ground with a barrage of testimonials before launching his attack on medieval Christian Peripateticism. This time his polemic is directed against Aristotle's "dialectic", which has been "and always will be harmful to the world, no less than his Physics [. . .], because filling the soul and overwhelming the

mind with witty vanities and vain wit, it makes man, for some tiny formal error, abandon and take no account of the plain and simple truth" (p. 340; the polemic against dialectic goes up to p. 354).

The discussion of Scholasticism takes place in the context of the above polemic. Valletta traces the history of the term "Scholastic", which from its original positive meaning came by the twelfth century to indicate "all those who, with the principles of Aristotle, stupidly and insolently explained the Mysteries of our Holy Faith", thus reducing theology to a "deplorable state". Valletta is just as critical of Albert the Great, but in the case of Aquinas he goes back to the idea (already used by Campanella) that Thomas was not a true Aristotelian, but one who simply made use of the Stagirite and his terminology "better to oppose the Heretical Aristotelians of his time". His presentation of Duns Scotus, on the other hand, is negative, in line with the contemporary view (pp. 354–365). Among the "necessary consequences of the subtleties of the bad Scholastics" we also find the doctrines of modern Quietism, which is characterized by its "Metaphysical and erroneous speculations of Mystics and the eccentricity of their opinions and vocabulary, such as 'Pure Faith', 'fixed Stare', 'mystic Shadows', 'Abstraction', 'Suspension', 'Simplification', 'Quietism', 'philosophical Sin', and such like" (p. 367). In keeping with his fundamental approach, Valletta is concerned to separate Catholic orthodoxy from scholastic Peripateticism, noting that the Protestant criticisms of the latter in no way threaten the dogmas of the Church. As in the case of dialectic, he counters degenerate "Adulterine Scholastic Theology", based on the art of sophistication, with "true Scholasticism", which, "sets in good order and reduces to a certain and clear method that which is scattered and obscure in Divine Scripture, in the Councils, and the Fathers, making human reason and Philosophy serve to clarify its Mysteries, but as a slave, however, and a tool to captivate the intellect, in the same way that St. Thomas can be said to have used it in his *Summa*" (pp. 368–372, where reference is made to Horn and to Catholic writers such as Melchor Cano, cardinal Pallavicino, and Mabillon).

The abrupt end to the work denies Valletta's *Istoria* its crowning conclusion. For an overall view of his opinions on recent, seventeeth-century thought, we can turn, however, to the *Lettera in difesa della moderna filosofia*, which stresses the theme of the progress of the sciences and the consequent superiority of the moderns: "And if anyone were to believe that Plato and Aristotle were infallible, they would be greatly deceiving themselves, since, after them so many sects, new stars, new planets, and other phenomena, and so many other things, and almost a new World have been discovered, it seems that a new Philosophy was needed to investigate them, the ancient ones not sufficing" (*Lettera*, pp. 172–174). In this dynamic concept of knowledge, which is opposed to the immobilism of the Peripatetics, Valletta refers above all to classical authors (Seneca, Cicero, and Tacitus), and then to Descartes, Malebranche, and Perrault, but also to Possevino and Steuco. He presents a detailed list of the conquests made by the moderns in the various branches of science, mentioning among other things the "observations regarding life and nutrition, the relation between air and water, described by our Tommaso Cornelio", as well as the "experiments of our Leonardo Di Capua in his *Pareri* and *Mofete*" (*Lettera*, p. 178). A modest place is

reserved for Galileo, whose name occurs just twice in the *Lettera*, without any particular emphasis attached to it, while he is completely absent from the *Istoria*, where the great "restorers of good philosophizing" are Bacon, Gassendi, and Descartes. In the *Lettera*, Descartes is the object of a veritable panegyric: Valletta extols him as the inventor of a philosophical system based on the existence of God and the immortality of the soul, a system which is the most consistent with Christianity and directly inspired by St. Augustine: "Therefore if any of us Christians were to philosophize with the same principles as Descartes, he would find himself in agreement with the thoughts of Augustine the Saint. In fact, Descartes has made known and explained these principles, either aware of them or rediscovering them with his own Christian, philosophical spirit. [. . .] This is the Philosophy of Descartes, who, considering that Augustine the Saint distinguished all Philosophy into only two principles, namely the immortality of the soul, so that we may know ourselves, and the existence of God, so that we may recognise our origin [. . .], founded the principles of his philosophy on these eternal and infallible truths" (*Lettera*, pp. 180–182; the panegyric of Descartes extends through pp. 183–185; see also pp. 133ff.).

4.3.4.4. The *Istoria filosofica* is the result of a long process of reflection and re-elaboration and therefore does not appear as a compact and organic "writing", but rather as a work rich in digressions, additions, and superimpositions (see, for example, p. 326, where the author explicitly declares that he has added other authoritative quotations "not found by me earlier"). In its genesis and its very structure, the work can be placed half-way between the genre of the history of philosophy and that of the apologetic and polemic tract. Indeed its historical discussion alternates with the presentation of veritable dossiers of proof in defence of corpuscular philosophy and against Petipateticism, which point more to the mentality of the expert lawyer than to that of the professional historian, as Croce pointed out (Croce, "La 'Istoria filosofica'", pp. 212–213). As far as his decision to use a "historical part" is concerned, this is also solemnly stated on a methodological level when he speaks of the alleged atomism of Philo of Alexandria, who is the object of a long discussion: "It seems that we have sufficiently demonstrated our purpose regarding corpuscular philosophy, derived from the doctrine of Moses, without wishing to force any Author to say something that he never thought, as has happened with a valid writer from beyond the Alps, who strives to prove that even Philo had been an Atomist, something which, in my limited judgement, I cannot even begin to comprehend, despite all his good reasons and all my weakness for Atoms [. . .] Let us leave Philo to himself, therefore, and let us not make him say more than he wished to say, and let us be content that men of greater worth than he, both in sanctity and in doctrine, have been on our side" (*Istoria filosofica*, pp. 286–288).

In reality, Philo is an isolated case, which has all the appearance of a tactical concession, made as a distraction, since Valletta's "historical" approach generally takes the form of a systematic adaptation and manipulation of texts and doctrines. This appears particularly clearly in the forced Christianization of Epicurus, the assimilation of the Fathers into Atomist philosophy, and the reduction of thinkers such as Herbert of Cherbury or Spinoza to Aristotelianism. This distorting of sources also

takes places at a less visible, but no less significant, level: see the example, given by Rak, of the "highly elliptical technique" with which a passage from Abelard is quoted (*Opere*, p. 511). An indication of the successive prevalence of Valletta's apologetic and polemic concerns within the historical framework can be found in the way in which the major philosophers of Antiquity are presented: Pythagoras, Democritus, and Epicurus are all dealt with according to a typical historiographical model, in which brief references to their lives are followed by information on their "dogmas" or "opinions" and then by praise attributed to them. In the case of Plato, a good deal of space is given over to the praise attributed to him and to a consideration of his doctrinal differences from Aristotle, while biographical details are kept to a minimum. Such details disappear altogether when we come to Aristotle, who is submerged right from the beginning in a series of negative judgements, which sound like a series of testimonies in an ideal trial brought against the founder of the Peripatetics.

In a work structured in this way, sources take on a fundamental importance, given that often "the discussion takes the form of a sequence of interlocking 'authorities' " (*Opere*, p. 511). The repertory of sources used by Valletta (which Rak has reconstructed in alphabetical order) is vast and heterogeneous, and testifies to the variety of his cultural interests as well as to the richness of his library. The availability of epigraphic material, as well as books, also allowed the author of the *Istoria* to use first-hand sources, such as an inscription regarding the presence of a "college" of Epicurean philosophers in Capua, taken from a stone preserved in Valletta's gallery (*Istoria filosofica*, p. 290). Thanks to his knowledge of English, Valletta was also able to make direct use of works published in this language, such as the *Court of the Gentiles* by Gale and *Divine Epicurus* (1676) by Antoine Le Grand. In the field of the history of philosophy, he shows himself to be up to date with the latest Dutch developments in the genre, since he cites the works of Vossius, Horn, Heereboord, and Gravius; among English authors, besides Gale, he uses the controversial Thomas Burnet; and the French presence is obviously very strong, from Ménage's notes on Diogenes Laertius to Launoy's *De varia Aristotelis fortuna* and Du Hamel's *De consensu*, as well as La Mothe Le Vayer, Huet (on the relationship between Moses and Mochus), and Rapin. Nor does Valletta neglect Italian authors, such as Paganino Gaudenzio and Cozzando. The major contribution to the text, however, comes not from the genre of the history of philosophy, but rather from that vast literature which includes the Fathers, the renaissance Platonists, and the supporters of modern philosophy, which he uses to build up a united front against dialectic and Peripateticism.

4.3.5. In an age in which the "republic of letters" was inundated with a flood of printed publications, Valletta's major works remained unedited or were the object of an incomplete and clandestine (the *Istoria*) or posthumous (the *Lettera*) publication. After a promising initial diffusion, this fact determined the exclusion of these works from the European cultural circuit (apart from the limited episode of Tartarotti's edition of the *Lettera*), to such an extent that after his death Valletta was remembered and celebrated for his merits as a cultural patron, rather than for

his writings, whose rediscovery and re-evaluation is the result of recent historical research (cf. *Opere*, pp. 61–74). Initially, the *Istoria filosofica* seems to have aroused a certain degree of interest, as it is mentioned in a letter by Peter Silvestre on the state of the sciences in Italy which appeared in the *Philosophical Transactions* (1700–1701), which points out that Valletta's intention was to "recommend and encourage Experimental Philosophy" (Comparato, *G. Valletta*, p. 266 note). Judging from the testimony collected by his biographer, Alessandro Pompeo Berti (who nevertheless speaks of the *Istoria* in vague terms, such as to suggest that he had never actually seen it: cf. *Opere*, pp. 63–64), the work was appreciated by the English man of letters James St. Amand in a letter dated 1709, to Nicolò Saverio Valletta, Giuseppe's grandson ("I have finished reading the book by your worthy Grandfather, and I greatly like his manner of treating Philosophy as a historian"). An analogous praise of the book "written in defence of Philosophy" can be found in a letter by Vallisneri (1710), but it is not clear whether he is alluding to the *Istoria* or to the *Discorso filosofico*. Jean Le Clerc refers specifically to the structure of the work as a history of philosophy, although he had not yet been able to examine it ("With what great delight will I read the work of your grandfather on the origin of the sects and on the *placita* of Epicurean Philosophy") (Berti, "Vita di Giuseppe Valletta", p. 61). This last testimony, which reflects the interest for *historia philosophica* in Dutch cultural circles, seems to us to be of greatest interest here.

The *Istoria* seems to have faded out of view during the course of the eighteenth century, and indeed neither Brucker nor Buonafede make any mention of it in the introductions to their respective histories. Some indication of the nature of the reception of Valletta's theoretical position can be found in the editorial vicissitudes of the *Discorso filosofico* (or *Lettera in difesa della moderna filosofia*), which caught the interest of Muratori: "As far as I know", he wrote to Valeriano Malfatti on the 8th September, 1732, "no letter has been published by the late Mr. Valletta on modern Philosophy. All I know is that counsellor Grimaldi, also a Neapolitan, has brought to light three books, in one of which he contests Aristotelian philosophy, and in another he defends modern [philosophy]. Probably this will be what was formerly meditated by Mr. Valletta" (*Epistolario muratoriano*, VII, (Modena, 1901), p. 3078; of particular interest is the association with Grimaldi: for his contribution to the history of philosophy see above, Introduction). Subsequently, once he had learnt of the contents of the work in question, Muratori distanced himself from Valletta's positions. In a letter to Tartarotti, dated 17th March, 1733, after recognising that Valletta's work was "truly worthy of light" and "may serve to repress some of the too enamoured and zealous members of the peripatetic school", he points out that its author "has pretended too much, and written in a rhetorical style, taking everything that came to hand to discredit Aristotle. The truth is that that philosopher, who appears in the works of Christians, although disfigured by so many useless questions, is not that miserable creature he would have us believe. And it is equally true that neither is Descartes that angel of light that many imagine him to be" (*Epistolario*, VII, pp. 3117–3118). Tartarotti in turn, in his lengthy *Osservazione* which accompanies the Rovereto edition of the *Lettera*, had provided an exhaustive account of these fundamental reservations, deploring the fact that the cause, just in itself, of the defence

of modern philosophy should be put forward by means of an excessive "depression of Aristotle" and an equally undue "deification, so to speak, of René Descartes". Far from the cultural and ideological climate of late seventeenth-century Naples, Tartarotti cannot understand the polemical demands which led Valletta to present his arguments in such an extremist fashion. He criticises the "predominance of the imagination" which characterizes some authors, who "consider things only from the side to which they are driven by the movement of their spirits, and from this it follows that they direct their attention to good alone or to evil". It seems that Valletta himself has been affected by this "itch", he who, in order to reach his objective, has not hesitated in distorting the text of the authors he cites, "making every effort and leaving no stone unturned to dull and to force the intellects of his readers, even when he acts within the limits of a mere collector of others peoples' judgements" (this last statement sounds like an implicit renunciation of that "historical part" which Valletta had stated he would follow). As far as the "deification" of Descartes is concerned, Tartarotti points out that the thought of this French philosopher is by no means devoid of contradictions, and that it is possible to make similar accusations against him as those brought against Aristotle (Tartarotti, "Osservazione", in *Opere*, pp. 392–395; see also pp. 401–402, where he outlines a profile of the birth of modern philosophy). It is finally worth noting that the *Lettera* was reviewed in the *Supplementa* of the *Nova acta eruditorum* of 1737, where Tartarotti's criticisms are taken up.

After centuries of neglect, Valletta's philosophical works have, in the past few years, become the object of research in the context of studies on Neapolitan culture in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and on the so-called pre-Vico period, and they have also aroused the interest of scholars investigating the history of philosophy. In effect, it is impossible to evaluate Valletta's place as a "historian of philosophy" without taking into consideration his place in the Neapolitan culture of the period. Together with D'Andrea, Valletta functions as a conduit between the generation of the *Investiganti*, of those like Tommaso Cornelio and Leonardo Di Capua (with whom the diffusion of the new philosophical and scientific culture in Naples began) and the generation of Grimaldi, Vico, and Giannone, and he represents this culture's first "historicist" flowering. The deliberate choice of a historical "writing" inspired by models of Dutch erudition is certainly motivated by reasons of a highly apologetic and polemical nature, which influence the models of interpretation and the structure of the work itself. However this does not justify Croce's excessively reductive judgement, which seems to resound with the distinction between "poetry" and "non-poetry": for Croce, Valletta's work "does not belong so much to the history of the history of philosophy as to that of the dispute over the primacy in truth between the various philosophies, which has a rich literature beginning with the comparisons between Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy, a theme which also occurs in Valletta's book" (Croce, "La 'Istoria filosofica' ", p. 215). The choice of the "historical part" as a means of participation in the philosophical debate is indeed particularly significant if we compare it to the analogous use of historical discourse in favour of the "moderns" used several years earlier by Coste (see above, Chapter 1, para 1.7). Coste, in line with Descartes' attitude to

the past, radically contrasts modern philosophy with ancient. In his *Lettera*, Valletta too stresses the distance between Descartes and Christian doctrine on one hand, and the pagan philosophers (Aristotle, but also Plato), on the other. In the *Istoria*, however, the model of a rupture and opposition between the great ages of philosophy is substituted by that of the continuity or rather a revival, through the different ages, of a same positive tradition, which is opposed at a certain point and for a certain period by a contrary tradition. This reclaiming of the past by someone who is decidedly "modern" largely exploits material and categories of renaissance Platonism and English neo-Platonism, both for a constructive purpose, in which the tradition of the Pythagorean and Platonic *pia philosophia* comes to be fused with the current of Democritus and Epicurus, and for a critical purpose (the large-scale use of anti-Aristotelian polemics in its most extreme and exasperated form). In this way, Valletta has at his disposal a sort of positive supercategory ("corpuscular philosophy") which is capable of interpreting the entire course of human thought and of introducing an agreement, or at least a "non-incompatibility" between philosophico-scientific atomism and Christian religion (the contrast with Bayle's contemporary position here is striking and emblematic). The contribution of renaissance Platonists is decisive to this process, and it can be traced back to a tendency of European, and not merely Neapolitan, dimensions.

If from this point of view Valletta's work is – in the development of the genre of the history of philosophy – a direct fruit of the legacy of the Renaissance, from another point of view it must be noted that its fundamental themes (the rebirth of a philosophy understood as a "type", the progressive development of an atomistic vision, the alternating prevalence of one philosophical tradition over another, for example) offer us elements of notable interest for an investigation of the "prehistory" of nineteenth-century historicism (cf. Garin, *Dal Rinascimento*, p. 16). Rak's claim that Valletta's *Istoria* was the "first Italian attempt at the historicization of philosophical facts" (*Opere,* p. 54), however, must be put squarely in perspective, since 20 years earlier Marsili had already traced a complete picture of the history of philosophy and had in turn sought the initiator of modern philosophy in the most ancient thought, identifying him in the figure of Democritus. From the point of view of "firsts", it seems that Valletta's work should rather be held up as the first example, on a European and not merely an Italian level, of a "committed" history of philosophy, born in the heat of a conflict which was not merely cultural and broadly-speaking ideological, but also social and political in a strict sense. It is in the context of the battle waged by the emerging Neapolitan "civil" class in the period of the trial of "atheists" that the spirit and the limits of the *Istoria* can be most clearly understood.

4.3.6. On Valletta's life, works, and thought in general (for works written in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, see *Opere*, pp. 67–68): Nicolini, *La giovinezza di G.B. Vico*, *passim*; B. Croce, "Shaftesbury in Italia", in Id., *Uomini e cose della vecchia Italia*, serie I (Bari, 1943^2), pp. 286–296; E. Garin, "Cartesio e l'Italia", GCFI, XXIX (1950), pp. 395–405; Id., *Nota* [on Valletta and Magliabechi's correspondence], GCFI, XXXV (1956), pp. 446–447; Garin, pp. 873–874, 914–915,

924; B. De Giovanni, *Filosofia e diritto in Francesco D'Andrea. Contributo alla storia del previchismo* (Milan, 1958), in particular pp. 161–166; Id., "Cultura e vita civile in G. Valletta", in *Saggi e ricerche sul Settecento* (Naples, 1968), pp. 1–47; Badaloni, *Introduzione a G.B. Vico*, pp. 205–218; Mastellone, *Pensiero politico e vita culturale a Napoli*, Chapter VII: "Il 'libertinisme' erudito a Napoli e la 'Istoria filosofica' del Valletta", pp. 177–196; Id., *Francesco D'Andrea politico e giurista (1648–1698). L'ascesa del ceto civile* (Florence, 1969); V.I. Comparato, *G. Valletta. Un intellettuale napoletano della fine del Seicento* (Naples, 1970); M. Rak, "Una teoria dell'incertezza. Note sulla cultura napoletana del secolo XVIII", *Filologia e letteratura*, XV (1969), pp. 233–297; Id., "Il disagio di Astrea. L'esperienza lirica di G. Valletta e la poesia civile napoletana dell'età libertina", *Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia dell'Università di Napoli*, XV, n.s. 3 (1972–1973), pp. 145–186; Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica di A. Genovesi*, *ad indicem.* For the historical and cultural background, see in particular T. Gregory, "Studi sull'atomismo del Seicento", GCFI, XLIII (1964), pp. 38–65; XLV (1966), pp. 44–63; XLVI (1967), pp. 528–541; D.B. Sailor, "Moses and Atomism", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXV (1964), pp. 3–16; L. Osbat, *L'Inquisizione a Napoli: il processo agli ateisti, 1688–1697* (Rome, 1974); F. Crispini, *Metafisica e scienza della vita: Tommaso Cornelio* (Naples, 1976); U. Baldini, "Il corpuscolarismo italiano del Seicento. Problemi di metodo e prospettive di ricerca", in *Ricerche sull'atomismo del Seicento* (Florence, 1977), pp. 1–76; M. Torrini, *T. Cornelio e la ricostruzione della scienza* (Naples, 1977); Id., "Cinque lettere di Lucantonio Porzio in difesa della moderna filosofia", *Atti dell'Accademia di scienze morali e politiche di Napoli*, XC (1979), pp. 143–171; M. Rak, "Di alcuni documenti dell'ideologia della ricerca atomista e dei suoi modelli di comunicazione (1681–1709)", in *Il libertinismo in Europa*, ed. S. Bertelli (Milan-Naples, 1980), pp. 435–463; C. De Ciampis, "Metafisica dell'atomo e nuova antropologia negli scritti inediti di F. D'Andrea", *Atti dell'Accademia di scienze morali e politiche di Napoli*, XCIV (1983), pp. 235–256; M. Agrimi, "Descartes nella Napoli del Seicento", in *Atti del Convegno per il 350° anniversario della pubblicazione del "Discours de la méthode" e degli "Essais"* (Rome, 1990), pp. 545–586; M. Fattori, "Note su Francis Bacon a Napoli tra Seicento e Settecento", *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, 1994/1, pp. 63–96, repr. in Ead., *Linguaggio e filosofia nel Seicento europeo* (Florence, 2000), pp. 121–157; A. Borrelli, *D'Andrea atomista. L' "Apologia" e altri inediti sulla polemica filosofica nella Napoli di fine Seicento* (Naples, 1996); F. Cacciapuoti, "Il processo agli ateisti: dalle discussioni teologiche al giurisdizionalismo", GCFI, LXXVI (1996), pp. 149–171; N. Struever, "Lionardo Di Capoa's 'Parere' (1681). A Legal Opinion on the Use of Aristotle in Medicine", in *Philosophy in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. Conversations with Aristotle*, ed. C. Blackwell and S. Kusukawa (Aldershot-Brookfield, 1999), pp. 322–336; S. Serrapica, *Per una teoria dell'incertezza tra medicina e filosofia. Studio su Leonardo di Capua (1617–1695)* (Naples, 2003).

On the fortune of Valletta' works: PhT, XXII (1700–1701), pp. 627–632; [A. Zeno], *Elogio del Signor G. Valletta, napoletano*, GLI, XXIV (1715), pp. 49–105 (repr. in Valletta, *Opere*, pp. 410–429); NL, VI (1717), p.179; A.P. Berti, "Vita

di G. Valletta Napoletano", in *Vite degli Arcadi illustri*, ed. G.M. Crescimbeni, IV (Rome, 1727), pp. 39–75; L.A. Muratori, *Epistolario*, VII (Modena, 1904), nos 3174 and 3233; G. Tartarotti, *Osservazione*, repr. in Valletta, *Opere*, pp. 390–403; NAE Suppl., II (1737), pp. 267–268. Review of the fortune: Valletta, *Opere*, pp. 61–74.

On the criticism (besides some of the works quoted above): B. Croce, "La 'Istoria filosofica' di G. Valletta", in Id., *La letteratura italiana del Settecento. Note critiche* (Bari, 1949), pp. 207–216; E. Garin, "G. Valletta storico della filosofia", in Id., *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo*, pp. 207–222; Rak, pp. 5–61; A. Corsano, "Il ritorno del Valletta", *Bollettino del Centro di studi vichiani*, VI (1976), pp. 161–165; Del Torre, pp. 38–39; L. Giansiracusa, "La giustificazione storica del corpuscolarismo nella 'Istoria filosofica' di G. Valletta", *Rivista di storia della filosofia*, XLIII (1988), pp. 181–191; Tolomio, *Italorum sapientia*, pp. 100–104; E. Lojacono, "Immagini di Descartes a Napoli: da Giuseppe Valletta a Costantino Grimaldi", in Id., *Immagini di René Descartes*, pp. 77–128.

4.4 Giacinto Gimma (1668–1735)

Idea della storia dell'Italia letterata

4.4.1. A contemporary of Vico (he was born in Bari on 12 March 1668), Giacinto Gimma studied in the schools of the Jesuits and then in Naples, acquiring a many-faceted culture. In particular, he had the opportunity of studying geometry under the guidance of Father Elia Astorini, the philosopher and mathematician known for his radical anti-peripateticism, who stayed in Bari in 1683 before abandoning the cloth and seeking refuge in Switzerland. In 1692, Gimma began work on the *Nova Encyclopaedia*, which remained unpublished due to the excessive price of printing, but which opened the way for him to academic honours. Four years later, in fact, he was appointed "promotor-censor" of the *Accademia degli Spensierati* of Rossano (of which Vico was also a member) bringing to it an attitude of openness to experimental inquiry, under the new name of the *Società scientifica degli Incuriosi*. He was also a member of the Roman *Accademia dei Pellegrini*, the *Arcadia* (from 1702), and the *Accademia degli Assorditi* of Urbino, to which he was admitted in 1730 along with Vico and Matteo Egizio. Ordained as a priest around 1699, he was appointed canon of the cathedral of Bari in 1705. Thanks to his post as "promotor" of the *Accademia* of Rossano, Gimma was often in contact with the Neapolitan intellectual environment. He took part in the controversies provoked by Gaetano Tremigliozzi, a follower of the Gassendian Sebastiano Bartoli, and Tommaso Cornelio in the defence of Carlo Musitano and the experimental method of the *Investiganti*. His characteristic modesty, however, led Gimma to turn down both the chair of physics offered to him by the Universities of Turin and Padua, and the episcopacy put forward by Clement XI. He died on 19th September, 1735.

4.4.2. Gimma was an indefatigable writer, who seemed to care more for quantity than quality. The list of his printed works includes in the first place the *Elogi*

accademici della Società degli Spensierati di Rossano (Naples, 1703); this work is a mine of information on Gimma's contemporaries and was also esteemed by Vico. After the *Descrizione compendiosa delli quarantacinque tomi in foglio della Biblioteca Universale del P.M. Coronelli* (Rome, 1704), Gimma published two volumes of academic dissertations at a distance of a good number of years one from another: *Dissertationum academicarum tomus primus, qui duas exhibet dissertationes, nempe* I. *De hominibus fabulosis;* II. *De fabulosis animalibus, in qua legitur de fabulosa generatione viventium, et fabulae in philosophia-experimentali, praesertim in hominum et animalium historia naturali introductae, non sine ratione et observationibus refellentur. Tomus secundus, qui duas exhibet dissertationes, nempe* I. *De brutorum anima et vita;* II. *Miscellanea de hominibus et animalibus fabulosis* (Naples, 1714–1732). These dissertations are, as Garin says, "notable not only for their methodological starting point but also for certain discussions of 'fables', which recall some of Vico's themes". Gimma points out that despite the development of scientific inquiry ("so that there is no Author who does not wish to be held an experimental philosopher"), there persists a belief in fabulous stories, while a "true and universal history of nature" is still lacking. This theme is taken up again in the two volumes *Della storia naturale delle gemme, delle pietre e di tutti i minerali, ovvero della Fisica sotterranea* (Naples, 1730), where, following on from Bacon, Gimma states that the elimination of "fables" and the recovery of that which is valid in the naturalistic investigation of the past are the necessary condition for the realization of the "mastery of natural things, bodies, medicines, mechanical things, and infinite other things" (Garin, *Note*, GCFI, 1959, pp. 426–427). Gimma had already expressed his commitment to experimental inquiry in a letter he sent as a young man to Carlo Musitano, where he stresses the efforts made by Descartes and other modern thinkers "to amplify this experimental philosophy" (the letter is included in Tremigliozzi's, *Nuova Staffetta da Parnasso circa gli affari della Medicina,* [. . .] *dirizzata all'illustr.ma Accademia degli Spensierati di Rossano* (Frankfurt, 1700), pp. 265–266; this work, to which Astorini also collaborated with an "epitafio" on "prime matter", was written in defence of Musitano's *Trutina medica* against an attack by Pietro Antonio De Martino).

Besides his scientific interests, Gimma was also animated by an interest in the history of culture, and this interest led him to create the first history of Italian literature, in a work which in reality, given the breadth and the variety of the cultural manifestations under examination, constitutes a veritable history of Italian culture from its origins to the eighteenth century. The contents of the work is indicated in the course of its long title: *Idea della storia dell'Italia letterata, esposta coll'ordine cronologico dal suo principio fino all'ultimo secolo, colla notizia delle Storie particolari di ciascheduna Scienza, e delle Arti nobili: di molte Invenzioni: degli Scrittori più celebri, e de' loro libri: e di alcune memorie della Storia Civile, e dell'Ecclesiastica: delle Religioni, delle Accademie, e delle Controversie in varj tempi accadute: e colla Difesa dalle Censure, con cui oscurarla hanno alcuni Stranieri creduto* [. . .] (Naples: printed by Felice Mosca, 1723), 2 vols, 4°. Among the "individual histories of each Science" there is also a history of the philosophical schools, whose breadth of scope takes it way beyond the context of a narrow history

of Italian philosophy. Indeed it is this which leads us to examine Gimma's work (which is usually catalogued among the histories of "literature") in the context of the history of philosophical historiography.

Among Gimma's various unpublished works, the most remarkable is the abovementioned *Nova Encyclopaedia*, *sive novus doctrinarum orbis, in quo scientiae omnes tam divinae quam humanae, nec non et artes tum liberales, tum mechanicae, iuxta Veterum et Recentiorum inventa Libris VI pertractantur* (Bari, Bibl. Naz. "Sagarriga-Visconti", Fondo D'Addosio, I, 113–116). This vast compilation combines composite traditions and influence, and draws on the numerous attempts to build a universal and methodic system of knowledge which characterize the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (we can think in particular of the works of Johann Heinrich Alsted, which Gimma confesses he has read "avidly"). The work, which is unclearly organized and probably lacks several parts, constitutes a sort of "mine" for Gimma's successive works. From the point of view of the history of philosophy, it is worth pausing to examine the beginning of this *Nova Encyclopaedia*, where, after a brief discussion of the "nobility" and the "utility" of learning, there is an account of the discoveries made by man before the Flood thanks to the wisdom infused by God, the rebirth of the sciences with Noah and his sons, the developments of the ancient and medieval philosophical schools, and finally the schools of the "more recent" philosophers, according to a framework which Gimma was to use again in the *Idea della storia dell'Italia letterata* (*Nova Encyclopaedia*, I, ff. 1–16; cf. Vasoli, *L'abate Gimma*, p. 794, note).

4.4.3. The factors which inspire the *Idea della storia dell'Italia letterata* are set out in the introduction to the work. After referring to Crescimbeni's *Istoria della volgar poesia*, written in defence of Italian poetry and unjustly scorned by men of letters from beyond the Alps, Gimma points out that "none of our compatriots, however, has taken pains to write a History of learned Italy, a nation which more than any other can vaunt things of greater glory in letters and in studies, even though one can read many histories which limit themselves to tales of the wars which have taken place over the various centuries in Italy itself, and in the World. If in the past a similar undertaking was not thought necessary, it will certainly be thought so now; and we will offend no one if with modesty we offer the glories of our Nation up to scrutiny, a Nation which today is unjustly censured for its ignorance by some foreigners, who are too presumptuous regarding their own Nation to the detriment of others. [. . .] And as the most erudite *abate* Antonio Conti rightly laments in a letter[4] [. . .] they pretend that the true Sciences are not held in esteem and cultivated here, that authors, books, and libraries multiply, while there is no growth in observation, arts, and doctrines. They claim that Italian Minds have no true Philosophy, no true Oratory, and no true Poetry, but that they live in the dark, that they follow the Arabs, the ancient Sophists, and the Cabalists, and that their taste in all this is corrupt. [They say] that in the Universities and the Schools there is nothing but pomp and

[4]The *Lettera* to the Bishop of Adria, already quoted (see above, Introduction), which begins by setting out the criticisms of Italy expressed by the "Ultramontanes" (GLI, XII, 1712, pp. 240–243).

ceremony, and that the Theologians and the Magistrates with their zeal do not permit any novelty in the press nor any freedom of thought, but only Commentaries on the things of the Ancients and useless toiling over doctrines, which serve to augment controversies" (*Idea*, p. 2).

Gimma strenuously opposes this picture of the traditional failings of baroque Italy, responding to the accusations point by point, and he therefore proposes to "demonstrate that the Italians were men of letters when other peoples were barbarian and uncivilized, that notable advances have been made by Italy to the Sciences and to the Arts, which not only have been seen to flower in all periods, but which are similarly not without honour in our own time [. . .], in which Italy is unjustly slandered as ignorant by some foreigners, of whom we can say, with all due respect, that which, according to Laertius, Plato said of his pupil Aristotle: 'they kick at us just like a new-born mule at his mother' ". These observations by Gimma are a typical example of the widespread reaction in eighteenth-century Italy against such mis-representation and the alleged envy of foreigners with regard to Italian culture, reduced to a peripheral role after its renaissance hegemony. His claims are not simply a sterile exaltation of Italian glories; they aim to have Italy recognised as a rightful member of the European cultural circuit, in a non-nationalistic vision which holds knowledge as the common inheritance of humanity: "Italy reveres every Nation, it welcomes and fosters all with love [. . .], in the same way she deserves their love and respect, just as all the sages write and speak of her with respect; indeed we must be united in the promotion of knowledge, which makes men be men" (*Idea*, p. 5).

Besides these reasons for Gimma's inspiration, there is another aspect to be emphasized: it is the concept of a national history not in political and military terms ("the tales of war"), but a history which embraces all cultural manifestations. Gimma's notion of "literature" is indeed all-inclusive and in practice corresponds to that of "culture" in its literary, philosophical, scientific, and artistic manifestations. Within a historical framework marked by the succession of centuries or ages, the *Idea della storia dell'Italia letterata* provides information on all fields of Italian culture, from "vernacular poetry" and the novel to music and canon and civil law, from philosophy and theology to the figurative arts, from the natural sciences to oratory, politics, and the art of war. Getto has pointed out that such a work offers "a new model of research" in the field of the history of literature (Getto, *Storia*, p. 50). Such a judgement is acceptable only if we limit the comparison to Crescimbeni's *Istoria della volgar poesia*, since in reality the *Italia letterata* is a derivative of seventeenth-century polyhistory, which must have been familiar to an author such as Gimma with his encyclopedic taste.

4.4.4. *Idea della storia dell'Italia letterata*

4.4.4.1. The work is preceded by a dedication to the countess Clelia Grillo-Borromeo (pp. i–xiv, not numbered) and by an introduction signed by Gaspare Campanile, "royal auditor" of the province of Trani (pp. xv-xxi). It is divided into two volumes with the page numbers following on from volume one to two (I: *Dal principio fino al secolo XIV*, pp. 1–408; II: *Dal 1401 fino al secolo XVIII*,

pp. 409–913), and includes five tables: the tables of errors, chapters, and controversies are placed at the beginning (pp. xxii–xxx), and the indices of authors and "most notable things" at the end (pp. 868–913). The text is divided into 50 chapters (Vol. I: Introduction and Chapters 1–35; II: Introduction and Chapters 36–50), subdivided into untitled paragraphs, and sometimes into "articles" with their own title. Bibliographical references are placed in the margin. There are 6 chapters that can be "cut out" and placed entirely within the framework of a history of philosophy, consisting of a total of 103 pages: Chapter I: "On the origin of the Sciences and the Creation of the World", pp. 11–15; VI: "On the Supremacy and the Wisdom of the Greeks", pp. 47–50; VII: "On the Italian Academy of the Greeks and the Philosophers of Magna Graecia", pp. 50–64; XXXI: "On the Theology of the Italians preserved and restaured", pp. 319–361; XXXVIII: "On the experimental Academies of natural Philosophy in Europe", pp. 476–487; XXXIX: "On the philosophies derived from the Italian Schools", pp. 487–516. Chapters IV and V are also of interest from the point of view of the history of philosophy, as they refer to the themes of post-diluvian and "barbarian" philosophy ("That Janus is Noah, who founded the Colonies in Italy, and brought the Sciences"; "On the ancient Etruscans, and their Sciences"); so to are Chapters IX, XI, and XII, devoted to the first, third, and fourth centuries AD (among those examined are Seneca, Plotinus, and the Fathers), Chapters XX ("On the ancient Schools of the Sciences in Italy", on the origin of the Universities), and XXX ("On the doctors of the Latin Church and the Italian religious orders").

4.4.4.2. The history of "learned Italy" takes a very broad-ranging approach, which divides the entire history of thought into periods. For Gimma these begin with Adam, and the first division comes with the descendants of Noah, who gave rise to three "Academies": from Shem and his Hebrew descendants there derives the "Syrian Academy, the tradition of theology, the Priestly Rite, chronology, prophecy, philosophy, politics, laws, medicine, and canticles"; from Ham the "Academy of the Chaldeans, Chemistry [...] and all the evil arts, as are the magic arts" (the most various figures are made to originate from this tradition of thought, from Nimrod to Zoroaster, Simon Magus, Carpocrates, Mohammad, and Cornelius Agrippa); from Japheth, founder of the Ionian Academy, finally, come "the Barbarian and Greek sciences" (*Idea*, pp. 13–14). The "wisdom of the Greeks" is divided into two "Academies", the Ionian and the Italic, the latter containing, besides the Pythagoreans, all the men of culture born in the south of Italy during the time of the Greeks and the Romans. From the birth of Christ onwards, Gimma divides his material into centuries (according to the traditional scheme of the *centuriae*), rather than periods; he makes use however of the usual division of Scholasticism into three eras (the first age goes from Abelard to Albertus Magnus, the second from Aquinas to Durand of Saint Pourçain, and the third closes with Gabriel Biel). The presentation of modern thought includes, besides the five currents which derive from ancient authors (atomist and Gassendian, Cartesian, "Maignanistic" [from Emmanuel Maignan], Platonic, and Aristotelian philosophy), a sixth school, different from those of the past, that is to say the "new experimental philosophy".

4.4.4.3. Gimma takes up the traditional idea that Adam, "created perfect and adult, and with knowledge of all things that can be known with natural study", did not lose this knowledge because of original sin, just as the Devil did not lose his capabilities after his rebellion against God. This knowledge was transmitted to his descendants, "with the addition of experience, true interpreter of Nature", and it was "set down in conclusions, in principles or canons, and precepts" (*Idea*, pp. 11–12). Some of those who later gathered together such knowledge were considered the inventors of certain sciences, as was the case with Thales for physics and Socrates for morality. Gimma relates the fabulous belief that the ancient Italic god Janus was none other that Noah, who was supposed to have founded colonies in Italy and brought with him the sciences, but he recognises that it is difficult to "show that Italy was learned as far back as the period after the Flood" (!) and he considers as unreliable the stories by Berosus, published by Annio of Viterbo (Chapters III–IV). As far as the Greeks are concerned, they received their knowledge from other peoples and in particular from the Hebrews. After a brief presentation of the development of the Ionian sect, Gimma gives a much longer account of the origin and the developments of the Italic sect. In particular he denies that Numa Pompilius was a contemporary of Pythagoras and, like Valletta, sides with authors who situate Pythagoras's birthplace in the Calabrian Samo: in this way, his Italianness is uncontested and the Italians can rightly call themselves, together with the Greeks, "masters of the world of learning" (p. 58). Gimma rejects, on the other hand, the theory of the French intellectuals, much in vogue in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in which it was the Druids who founded the sciences, who then transmitted them to the Greeks and then on to the rest of the world (pp. 175–176, where there is a reference to Barthélemy de Chasseneux's *Catalogus gloriae mundi* [1546]).

Examining the most illustrious figures of Roman culture, Gimma dwells on Seneca: after a long series of testimonies for and against, he denies Seneca's alleged correspondence with St. Paul and his adherence to Christianity (pp. 93–95). His hostility to French men of letters and erudite scholars reappears in Chapter XX, where Gimma denies that the University of Paris (whose first seed was supposedly planted by Charlemagne in 790) is the "mother of all those that are in Europe": it was born, rather, from the example of the pre-existing Italian "academies" which were founded by the Romans, or even by the Etruscans as in the case of Bologna (!). The four great doctors of the Latin Church were also Italian: St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Jerome (born in "Sdrigna [= Stridone] in Istria [*sic*]"), and St. Gregory. The African origin of St. Augustine does not constitute a problem here because Gimma gives little importance to his place of birth, stressing rather that it was in Italy that Augustine converted to Christianity, "and therefore we may call him Italian, both for his new spiritual life, and for his new doctrine, which he learnt there, and because he was a noble member of the Roman Church" (p. 283).

Chapter XXXI, which traces the history of ancient and medieval Christian thought, is of particular interest from the historiographical point of view. The origin of Christian theology is laid at the door of Dionysius the Areopogite, "converted to the faith by St. Paul" and martyred in Paris. Gimma provides a century-by-century list of theologians from the birth of Christ to the sixth century, then deals with the origins of Scholasticism. He takes up a position in the by now centuries-old

controversy over this system of thought which was accused of having mixed philosophy with theology and of having strayed from the example of the Apostles and the early Fathers: calling in his defence on Book VIII of Cano's *De locis theologicis*, as well as on a statement by Clement of Alexandria, Gimma maintains the necessity of using philosophy in theological arguments to defend the faith and confute heresy. In the course of its history, Christian theology has had to adapt itself to the various adversaries that it has faced, and the philosophy of Aristotle was adopted "because the Heretics were the first to make use of it to refute matters of faith" (p. 330).

This defence of the Catholic cultural tradition comes to be linked with a sense of national pride, and gives rise to a reinterpretation of Scholasticism which contrasts with the humanist and protestant approach of the period. Gimma points out that the introduction of Aristotle into the schools, in itself totally justified, gave rise in Paris and in Oxford to deviations and heresies, and therefore to great disputes, since that philosophy "was handled with little judgement". Thus were born the errors of Berengar of Tours, David of Dinant, Roscelin and Amalric, Abelard, the Waldensians and the Albigensians. The credit for having saved theology from the state of corruption into which it had fallen due to the incorrect use of philosophy is attributed mainly to two Italians, Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas: "The restauration was truly begun by one of our Italians, that is to say Peter Lombard, who was the initiator, and after many years Alexander of Hales and Albertus Magnus took the task upon themselves, slightly and almost imperceptibly; but St. Thomas Aquinas, also an Italian, having entirely purged philosophy and coupled it to theology, finally brought it to perfection, making it the servant of the latter [. . .] and he deserves from all the Schools and all learned men the honourable title of prince both of theologians and Christian philosophers, by making Aristotle himself speak like a Christian" (p. 357). Gimma then devotes a dozen pages to the life, studies, and doctrine of Aquinas, and, with regard to the dispute between the Thomists and Scotists, quotes several writers living around the turn of the sixteenth century who demonstrate the agreement or "convenience" between these two thinkers.

The theme of the relationship between ancient and modern philosophers dealt with in Chapter XXXIX is conditioned to a great extent by that nationalistic spirit which inspires the whole of Gimma's work. Indeed Gimma does not hesitate in stating that "all the principal philosophies introduced into Europe derive from the Schools of Italy", like "so many streams which issue from Italian sources" (p. 487). This is the case for ancient and modern atomism, thanks to the succession of Pythagoras, Zeno, Leucippus, Democritus, and Epicurus, in such a way that the philosophy "which they now call Gassendian, is none other than that of Democritus and Epicurus". He defends the high moral value of the Epicurean concept of virtue, although he points out the errors which Epicurus committed. There is also a positive verdict on Lucretius, of whose work Denis Lambin's 1563 edition is mentioned. Among the modern followers of atomism Gimma mentions, besides Gassendi, Bernardino Telesio,[5] Sébastien Basson, Boyle, and

[5]Reference to Telesio, a philosopher from Cosenza, was normal in southern-Italian historiography of the time (cf. Garin, *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo*, pp. 89–90).

Galileo, the latter "however thought differently from Democritus and Epicurus regarding atoms and vacuum" (here a passage from Tommaso Cornelio is quoted, which notes the confusion between mathematical points and physical points). Descartes too is reduced to fit the atomistic mould, he who "took from various ancient philosophers and much from our Italians". Following the opinions expressed by Huet in his *Censura philosophiae Cartesianae*, Gimma presents Descartes's thought as a "patchwork of various things, of various sentiments derived from ancient and from modern philosophers, without him naming any of them": St. Augustine for the *cogito*, Empedocles for the origin of the world, the atomists for vortexes, and Giordano Bruno for the conception of the cosmos. Still inspired by Huet, Bruno is defined as a "precursor of Cartesianism" (as Father De Benedictis had already noted in his controversy with Grimaldi: see Garin, *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo*, p. 108 note); his system is made to derive from the doctrines of Niketas, Philolaus, and other Italian Pythagoreans. Gimma recalls that the writings of Bruno were prohibited by the Apostolic See, which means that Descartes's philosophy "derives from impure Italian sources, and in particular condemned sources". His attitude towards Descartes is decidedly hostile, so much so that he includes the negative opinions of other writers, as well as Huet who is in himself emblematic (*Idea*, pp. 492–495). The thought of Emmanuel Maignan is linked back to the "elementary philosophy" of Empedocles, and is thus a "little stream derived from its Italian source"; as for Plato, whose Greek origin cannot be doubted, Gimma observes that despite this, his philosophy can be described as Italian, since he learnt it from the Pythagoreans and it subsequently found in Italy its continuators and its "renewers", among whom he stresses above all Ficinus and Patrizi (pp. 496–500). Moving on to Aristotle, his philosophy was "undoubtedly Greek [. . .] but it then became Italian, if we want to regard its progress"; in any case, Aristotle took some of his doctrines from the Italic philosophers, like Archytas. Starting from the vicissitudes of Aristotle's works, Gimma outlines a brief history of Peripateticism, which can be directly linked to what he set out in Chapter XXXI. Among those who freed Aristotle's system from the errors of the Arabs he cites Piccolomini and Zabarella; "little by little", he continues, "once the freedom to criticise Aristotle had been introduced – and Bernardino Telesio of Cosenza was one of the first to attack his whole system – a new philosophy had been introduced" (p. 508).

This is "Experimental Philosophy", which is contrasted to all the other doctrines inherited from the past: "For many centuries philosophers have shown no other care than to speculate on, comment on, and translate what the Ancients had taught, and all their effort in argumentation and disputation has been used in order to defend those doctrines which have been received from the Greeks, blindly swearing on the very words of the Masters, explaining the opinions of others, and trying to bring to perfection those yet uncertain, rather than toiling to discover new truths grounded in experience. [. . .] Another philosophy, however, which they call Experimental, is professed by some Moderns who cultivate only that natural Science which thanks to Anatomy and observation errs less, and can discover the secrets of Nature by means of the senses, guided by reason and experience, as long as these do not contradict the teachings of the Holy Faith" (p. 509). Gimma insists on the innovative nature of this

"totally different way of philosophizing", citing Cornelio and his own dissertations *De hominibus fabulosis* and *De fabulosis animalibus*. He mentions the instruments which have made the progress of science in the last century possible, and declares that "the principles of modern finds [. . .] have almost all come from our Italians, which have then been followed by the Academies of the English, the French, the Danish, the Dutch, and others, who have raised sumptuous edifices on top of Italian foundations with the aid of their great princes and kings". The geographical and astronomical discoveries, Boyle's research into the elastic force of air, that of Harvey into the circulation of the blood, and Gilbert's "magnetic philosophy" were all anticipated or prepared for by Italians. Following Cornelio, Gimma attributes the glory of having initiated the "freedom to philosophize" to three Italians (Telesio, Patrizi, and Galileo); he presents a list of the praise of Galileo made by Italian and foreign scholars, and then reviews the most recent scientists and naturalists, as Antonio Conti had already done in his famous *Lettera* (pp. 515–517).

4.4.4.4. In his presentation of ancient and modern thought, Gimma maintains the criterion of the division by sects, while his chapter on Scholasticism presents a general chronological reconstruction, age by age. Within this framework, he does not treat the major philosophers according to a fixed scheme (life, work, doctrines . . .), but limits himself mostly to relating those sources which contain a judgement on the author in question, or to developing those aspects which seem to him to be of greatest relevance, in the form of a sketch or an "idea" rather than that of a systematic treatment. The range of sources is very wide, even considering the polyhistorical nature of the work. Gimma is aware of modern literature dedicated to the history of philosophy, besides the classics, and he uses the works of Pereira, Vossius, Gravius, and Rapin as well as the modest preface by Pourchot. Besides non-Italian authors (among whom are Gassendi, de Launoy, Huet, Claude Fleury, Mabillon, and Michael Ettmüller) he quotes Italian writers such as Steuco, Tassoni, Ciampoli, Fardella, Piccinardi, and above all Cornelio.

4.4.5. Reviewed favourably by Pier Caterino Zeno in the *Giornale de' Letterati d'Italia* (which, as it is known, had been founded with the intention of defending the good name of Italian culture against the attacks of "Ultramontanes"), Gimma's work was criticised by the *Bibliothèque Italique* for its overabundant and superficial erudition: in particular the reviewer judged the first volume to be superfluous, since "it is only from the fifteenth century onwards that we must search for Italian prerogatives in the sciences and the arts", while that which regards the Middle Ages "belongs to the rest of Europe just as much as to Italy. France, Spain, Germany, and England have had their learned, their religious men, their academies and universities" (BI, II, 1728, p. 12; but see also the letter sent in 1729 by Scipione Maffei to the *Bibliothèque Italique*, in which Gimma is defined as "a poor man devoid of literary culture, whose book has made everyone in Italy laugh and is sold alongside popular tales, such as Giulio Cesare Croce's *Bertoldo*": cf. Crucitti Ullrich, *La "Bibliothèque Italique"*, p. 146). The *Bibliothèque Italique* also regrets the offensive tone used by Gimma towards Luther, accused of despising literature and philosophy, a point also

taken up by the *Acta eruditorum* (where it is interesting to note the association of the *Idea* with the planned *Historia litteraria* of Prussia conceived in 1710 by the learned philologist Michael Lilienthal: AE, 1725, p. 57).

The *Idea della storia dell'Italia letterata* was judged harshly by Tiraboschi, and later by Mazzoni and Getto, who points out the inexactitude of its information and its "constructive failings". In effect, the work does contain many blunders and the attitude with which Gimma relates the fantastic beliefs regarding the relation between Janus and Noah, or Plato's Christian faith, is that of the encyclopaedic collector of information and not the historian who evaluates his sources critically. The drawing up of a general history of Italian culture is nevertheless of particular interest, even from the point of view of the history of philosophy: indeed it re-examines the problem inherited from polyhistory of the relationship between the history of philosophy, the history of the sciences, and the history of culture, that is to say, the *histoire de l'esprit humain* evoked by Le Gendre de Saint-Aubin and Deslandes. On the other hand, the "national" character which the history of philosophy assumes under Gimma lends itself to an interesting comparison both with contemporary Neapolitan literature, in particular Vico (we can think of the reference to the "most ancient wisdom of the Italians"), and, in another sense, with Gioberti's idea of the "moral and civil primacy" of the Italian nation (1843), as well as with the famous theory of Bertando Spaventa on the "European circulation of Italian thought" (1862). Gimma's approach is certainly naïve, but it seems unfair to say, as far as the work's philosophical and scientific aspect is concerned, that in his defence of Italian culture he has an eye only on the past (cf. Titone, *La storiografia*, p. 42). It is true that he makes use of Pythagoras to attribute successive developments in philosophy as a whole to the "Italian Academy", but we cannot ignore the emphasis he lays on the most recent developments in Italian scientific thought, which has every right to be considered part of the "European" thought of the period, and which Gimma actively supports.

4.4.6. On Gimma's life and works: D. Maurodinoja, "Breve ristretto della vita di Giacinto Gimma", in [A. Calogerà], *Raccolta di opuscoli scientifici e filologici*, Vol. XVII (Venice, 1738), pp. 339–427; A. Iurilli, "Editoria e scienza in un carteggio del primo Settecento. Lettere di G. Gimma ad Antonio Vallisneri (1705–1722)", in *L'enigma, la confessione, il volo. Lettere sommerse fra Sei e Settecento*, ed. G. Baroni (Azzate, 1992), pp. 45–118; C. Preti, "Una fonte inedita per una biografia intellettuale dell'abate G. Gimma (1668–1735)", *Archivio storico per le Province Napoletane*, CXIII (1995), pp. 189–243; DBI, LIV (Rome, 2000), pp. 768–774. On Gimma's relations with Astorini and Vico: DBI, under *Astorini*, IV, pp. 487–491; G.B. Vico, *L'autobiografia, il carteggio e le poesie varie*, ed. B. Croce and F. Nicolini (Bari 1929^2), pp. 278, 289, 296; Garin, *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo*, pp. 135–137.

On the fortune of Gimma's works: GLI, XXXIV (1723), pp. 423–425; XXXV (1724), pp. 449–451; XXXVII (1726), p. 400; AE, 1725, pp. 56–62; BI, II (1728), pp. 1–49; G. Tiraboschi, *Storia della letteratura italiana* (Modena, 1787–1794), I, p. viii; Crucitti Ulrich, *La "Bibliothèque Italique"*, pp. 141–146 and 243–247.

On the criticism: G. Mazzoni, *Avviamento allo studio critico delle lettere italiane* (Florence, 1923[3]), p. 148; Natali, *Il Settecento*, pp. 40, 241–242, 371; Getto, *Storia delle storie letterarie*, pp. 47–54; Titone, *La storiografia*, pp. 40–43; Garin, p. 916; E. Garin, "Giacinto Gimma. Note e notizie", GCFI, XXXVIII (1959), pp. 426–427; Id., *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo*, pp. 89–90, 103–104, 224–225; C. Vasoli, "L'abate Gimma e la 'Nova Encyclopaedia'. Cabbalismo, lullismo, magia e 'nuova scienza' in un testo della fine del Seicento", in *Studi in onore di Antonio Corsano* (Manduria, 1970), pp. 787–846 (repr. in C. Vasoli, *Profezia e ragione. Studi sulla cultura del Cinquecento e del Seicento* (Naples, 1974), pp. 821–912); Id., "Giacinto Gimma", *Studi settecenteschi*, XVI (1996), pp. 43–60; R. Girardi, "Letteratura e scienza fra Sei e Settecento: G. Gimma e il progetto degli Spensierati", *Lavoro critico*, XI-XII (1988), pp. 91–124; M. Cambi, "G. Gimma e la medicina del suo tempo. Storia di una polemica nella Napoli di Giambattista Vico", *Bollettino del Centro di studi vichiani*, XX (1990), pp. 169–184; Id., "Presenza dei 'Disquisitionum magicarum libri sex' di Martin A. Del Rio nelle opere di G. Gimma", *Archivio di storia della cultura*, VIII (1995), pp. 185–199; G. Belgioioso, *Cultura a Napoli e cartesianesimo. Scritti su G. Gimma, P.M. Doria, C. Cominale* (Galatina, 1992), pp. 19–165; Tolomio, *Italorum sapientia*, pp. 104–110; F.A. Sulpizio, *"Parlar philosophice" – "Parlar medice". Erudizione, filosofia, medicina nell'abate G. Gimma (1668–1735)* (Lecce, 2002); Id., "*Si potuit, ergo creavit*. La critica alla filosofia cartesiana di Giacinto Gimma", in *Descartes et les lettres. "Epistolari" e filosofia in Descartes e nei cartesiani*, ed. F. Marrone (Florence, 2008), pp. 234–246.

4.5 Giambattista Capasso (1683–1735)

Historiae Philosophiae Synopsis

4.5.1. Born in Grumo Nevano near Aversa (Naples) in 1683, Giambattista Capasso was the third of four brothers, the eldest of whom, Nicola, was to become the most famous (a pupil of Domenico Aulisio, he quickly climbed the academic ladder, teaching first canon and then civil law; he was an adversary of Vico, whom he labelled with the epithets "pedant" and "little consumptive", and in his poems in the Neapolitan dialect and macaronic Latin he railed against the representatives of the new Neapolitan culture, among whom Valletta). Giambattista began his Greek and Latin studies under the guidance of his brother Nicola, and went on to study medicine in Naples under Nicola Cirillo, an eclectic Cartesian, open to other philosophical and scientific systems, and in particular to that of Newton. In Naples he came into contact with his brother's numerous friends and also managed to make the acquaintance of Paolo Mattia Doria and Celestino Galiani. He remained in Naples after his university studies, practising medicine and at the same time giving private lessons in Greek, Latin, and philosophy. He returned to Grumo, possibly for reasons of health, and then moved to the nearby Frattamaggiore, where his brother Nicola had bought a house for himself and his family. It is in this period that, given the lack of any churchman capable of teaching Greek in the new seminary in Aversa,

the bishop entrusted the post to Giambattista, who travelled there every day on an old horse to hold his lessons. He died young in 1735, not long after the accession of Charles of Bourbon to the Neapolitan throne.

4.5.2. Giambattista Capasso was the author of poetry in Latin, macaronic Latin, and the Neapolitan dialect (influenced by his brother Nicola), most of which has been lost. His fame in the Republic of Letters is due to a lengthy general history of philosophy: *Historiae Philosophiae Synopsis, sive De Origine, et Progressu Philosophiae: De Vitis, Sectis, et Systematis omnium Philosophorum libri IV. Johanni V, Lusitaniae Regi, etc. dicati* ab Joh. Baptista Capasso *Phil. et Med. Doct. Neapolitano* (Naples: Typis Felicis Muscae, 1728) , 4°, [14]–472 pp.

4.5.3. The circumstances and the motives behind the creation of the *Synopsis* are outlined by Capasso in his preface (*Lectori philosopho*), where the work is presented as the result of teaching activity and study which had begun 20 years earlier. Aware of the need to preface the systematic study of philosophy with a historical introduction to the subject, Capasso had read all the books of this type that he had been able to find in Neapolitan libraries, above all that of Valletta, hoping to find a work which would present an overall view of the development of philosophy from its origins to the present day ("which taking its beginning from the Origin, would show the progress of Philosophy and the Systems of the Philosophers which have appeared in the various nations and ages of the World, and in their various sects, up to our times": *Synopsis*, p. [xi]). The results of his research, however, were disappointing since all the works examined turned out to be incomplete ("some dealt little with the Origin, others treated Barbarian Philosophy, or some part of it, most were lengthier on Greek Philosophy"). Having turned in vain to the large historical dictionaries and to the scholars with whom he was familiar, Capasso penned a treatise for his pupils ("To be considered an embryo of Philosophical History"), organised according to the framework described above, which until then had remained "untried". Capasso interrupted the work at the Greeks due to health problems, and also because he had been made aware of the history of philosophy written in English by the "most learned" Stanley, which, he feared, had been written "according to the same principles". Once he had obtained the Latin translation of the work, he realized that in reality Stanley (to the same extent as others "who give their books the captivating title of the History of Philosophy") had written "not a Universal, but a Partial History of Philosophy, that is only on the Greeks, but in a prolix and excessively erudite fashion", with additions on the Oriental philosophies. Capasso therefore decided to complete his own work, which took him around 5 years "with the aid of no small number of books". He specifies that he has added the term *Synopsis* to the title since his intention was merely to provide for more learned scholars a first outline (*ideam*) of a work which was still missing in the "Republic of Letters" (p. [xii]).

The didactic intent of the work is reaffirmed – on a higher level and in a more poetic tone – in the initial dedication to John V of Bragança, King of Portugal, whose court mathematician was another of Capasso's brothers, the Jesuit father Domenico. In order to return the favours received from the sovereign, Giambattista offers, through his book, to teach philosophy to the heir to the throne and to the King's

other sons, mindful of Plato's words, "excellent is the Republic where Philosophers rule, or Rulers philosophize". This teaching is conceived of in a historical form, in such a way as to be able to draw from all the sources and collate what they contain that is good and in conformity with reason and religion: "I judged that the precepts of Philosophy were to be taken for Him [referring to the heir to the throne] not from one Philosopher, either from the ancients or from the more recent, but from all of them, so that by choosing whatever is good and in conformity with reason and Religion in each of them, a single – and indeed the best – system of philosophy, made up from all of them, could be offered to him". By setting out a programme of study for the use of the Dauphin, centered on philosophy and history, Capasso also provides a theoretical justification for the teaching of the history of philosophy, which takes the form of a working synthesis of the two disciplines: "As two things are necessary to constitute an excellent Prince: Philosophy, which with its teaching guides his moral behaviour and renders him wise (indeed Kings and Princes are not those who wield the sceptre, but those who know how to command), and History, which by proposing the deeds of those who are the most excellent in virtue for imitation teaches Prudence, which is necessary to every Prince just as the soul is necessary to the body – indeed History, if it is present, makes mature men of boys; if it is lacking, it turns mature men to boys – I believe I will be performing a worthy deed if in this single book I can provide the excellent Prince with both" (pp. ii–iii). The letter of dedication continues with a panegyric of John V, whose religious zeal and love of culture are praised: Capasso also mentions among other things the foundation of the Royal Academy of History in 1720.

Besides the contingent need to adapt his manual of the history of philosophy (conceived originally for the pupils of a modest private school) to the curriculum of a future king, Capasso's observations are based on his own eclectic tendency, which renders a historical approach to the study of philosophy indispensable. Indeed his alleged sympathy for Cartesianism, which has been noted by modern scholars on the basis of the excessive space given to the doctrines of Descartes (see below, para 4.5.4.3), should not lead us to consider his stance in favour of eclecticism as less important. The opportunity of being able to choose the best from the various sects, as stated in the dedication quoted above, is repeated again in the introduction to the eclectic school with a significant stress on the "consonance" between this attitude of thought and the Christian religion ("However this Sect is the most consonant of all with the most Holy Christian Religion, this Sect which, selecting from all the Sects of Philosophers those teachings which were in accordance with Faith and reason, forms the Christian and the Philosopher perfect in every respect"). Further on, at the beginning of his treatment of the Roman Eclectics, Capasso makes a decisively positive judgement when he observes that the wisest of the Romans "did not usually adhere to only one sect, but applied themselves to the doctrine of all the sects, in order that, by selecting from each one that which came closest to the truth, they were seen to follow not a sect, but the truth itself". But the most explicit profession of his eclecticism, connected to the historical method, comes precisely at the end of his discussion of the doctrines of Descartes: "And this is a Summary of the whole of Descartes's Philosophy, short certainly, but precise; by using the Historical approach

(*Historico more*) (not unlike the way used to treat the Platonic, Stoic, Pythagorean, Epicurean, Aristotelian, and other doctrines), we place it before the others, so that by selecting from this and from the others what is best, one is able to formulate the Eclectic philosophy, which is the most praiseworthy of all" (pp. 166, 244, 445). It is in this context that Capasso's sympathy for the eclectic Buddeus must be interpreted (see below, para 4.5.4.2).

4.5.4. *Historiae Philosophiae Synopsis*

4.5.4.1. The work is prefaced by a dedication to the King of Portugal (pp. [i-ix]), a poem in praise of the sovereign in 19 elegiac distichs (p. x), a note to the *Lector philosophus* (pp. xi–xii), and the permission to print (pp. xiii–xiv: it is worth noting that the civil censor of the work was none other than Nicola Cirillo, "Primarius Medicinae Professor Regius", who had been Capasso's teacher). After a brief *Prooemium* (p. 1), the text is divided into four books, subdivided in turn into chapters (Book I: *On the Rise of Philosophy and the first Wise Men*, 6 Chapters, pp. 2–18; [the first two chapters serve as a theoretical introduction and tackle the problems of the definition, division, etymology, origin, and finality of philosophy]; Book II: *On Barbarian Philosophy and its Sects*, 9 chapters, pp. 19–58; Book III: *On Greek Philosophy*, 16 chapters, pp. 59–173; Book IV*: On the more Recent Philosophers*, 14 chapters, pp. 174–454, followed by a short *Appendix of Philosophers Omitted*, pp. 454–461, containing both ancient and modern authors). The work closes with an *Index of books and chapters* (pp. 462–463), an *Index of Philosophers* (pp. 464–471), and an *Errata corrige* (p. 472). The work has no notes in the margins or at the foot of the page; the bibliographical references are inserted into the body of the text. The work is embellished by an engraving with the portrait of John V, which precedes the frontispiece.

4.5.4.2. As is apparent from the division of the work, Capasso divides the development of philosophy into four general periods. The first is that of the origins, which begins with Adam himself and progresses through Noah, Abraham, and Moses, ending with Solomon. The second deals with *Barbarica* philosophy and includes the various sects of the Hebrews (Scribes, Recabites**,** Essenes, Pharisees, Sadducees, . . .), and then the philosophies of the Chaldaeans, the Persians, the Sabeans**,** the Indians (Gymnosophists, Brahmans, Germans or *Hylobii*, and Callans), the Chinese (divided into three of four sects), the Phoenicians, Egyptians, Ethiopians, Libyans, Scythians, Thracians, and Gauls. The third period (*Philosophia Graecanica*) begins with *philosophia Mythica et Poëtica* and with the ancient sages; Capasso then uses Diogenes Laertius's division into two large sects, the Ionian and the Italic. The first goes from Thales, through Anaximander, Anaxagoras, Anaximenes, and Archelaus, ending with Socrates, who is the source of the minor Socratic schools as well as the "three most famous families of philosophers", the Academics, the Peripatetics, and the Stoics. Capasso distinguishes between the *Academici* who succeeded one another in the school founded by Plato, and the *Platonici*, who took up their master's doctrines, such as Apuleius, Calcidius, Hypatia, and Marsilius Ficinus. Plotinus, Porphyry, and Jamblicus on the other hand are placed among the

Eclectics. The Italic sect is divided into a further four sects: the Heraclitian, the Eleatic, the Sceptic, and the Epicurean. The section on Greek philosophy ends with the Eclectic sect, which came into being with Potamon and which is divided into two parts, the *Sectatores Ethnici* (that is the neo-Platonists quoted above) and the *Eclectici Christiani* (Ammonius Saccas, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Gregory the Thaumaturge, and Lactantius).

The fourth and last period is the largest and the most comprehensive, since it stretches from Numa Pompilius (!) to contemporary philosophers. Indeed under the heading of *Philosophi Recentiores* Capasso groups the thinkers of ancient Rome, those of the Middle Ages, and those of the modern period. His reasons for this broadening of the concept of "the more recent" (*recentior*) are set out at the beginning of Book IV: given that it is a particularly difficult task ("a hard, and most difficult job, and of all of them one unattempted as yet") to number all the philosophers who have lived from the foundation of Rome up to our times, Capasso reminds us that he had promised – in the preface to the work – to deal in Book IV with "only the More Recent Philosophers, and the new way of philosophizing". Subsequently, however, he changed his mind in order to give his discussion that completeness and universality which had been his first aim: "But having considered the question further, to avoid publishing an imperfect Work, I decided to treat all Philosophers who after the Greeks first lived in Rome and then in almost all the other regions of Europe, and in this way to show that Philosophy has come down to us in an ordered series and like a kind of chain, if I can say so; and to show how Philosophers have taken it from Philosophers, that is, the Barbarians from the Hebrews, the Greeks from the Barbarians, and finally the Latins from the Greeks. [. . .] Anyone can easily infer from what is said, that I am not to be accused of a sin, if I number the Romans with the more Recent Philosophers, the Romans who, flowering even in the first years after the foundation of Rome, were contemporary with many of the Greek Philosophers, and were even more ancient than many of them; indeed besides the fact that the order of History requires that I should place the Romans after the Greeks, since the Romans borrowed from the Greeks Philosophy, Jurisprudence, and all the sciences, here we do not pay attention so much to the chronological order as to the derivation of Philosophy. Moreover, the name More Recent (*Recentiorum nomen*) is applicable to all the Romans, even the most ancient, because they were more Recent than the Greeks in the sciences" (pp. 174–175).

Capasso feels the need therefore to outline not so much a periodization (*temporis series*) as an ordered concatenation of philosophical schools and of writers within each individual school (*Philosophiae derivatio*), in such a way as to conform as far as possible to the method of organization codified by Diogenes Laertius. This methodological choice is further clarified in the following pages, in which Capasso shows that he is well aware of the alternative between dealing with the philosophers by sects and dealing with them by ages, and he places the latter within the former: "here it is worth noting that when dealing in the fourth book of this History with the more Recent Philosophers, I will list them not according to the different sects they belonged to, but respecting the succession of time. Indeed, since in the other books, and above all in the third which is on the Greeks, I have distinguished them

by sects and not according to the period of time, in this book too I consider it more appropriate to keep the same order. [. . .] In any one sect each Philosopher will be placed according to his time" (p. 180; see also pp. 258–259 where Capasso is again concerned to explain the method he has followed). The Roman philosophers are thus divided into the Pythagoreans (Numa Pompilius, Ennius, Nigidius Figulus, . . .), the Platonists and Academics (Varro, Aurelius Cotta, Cicero, Antiochus of Ascalon, Lucullus, Brutus, Plutarch, Galen, . . . and then Athenagoras, Maximus of Tyre, St. Justin, Tatianus, and Philo of Alexandria), the Cynics (Demetrius), the Stoics (Athenodorus of Tarsus, Cato of Utica, Strabo, Seneca, Epictetus**,** Arrianus, Marcus Aurelius, . . .), the Peripatetics (Marcus Piso, Senarchus of Seleucia, Andronicus of Rhodes, Nicholas of Damascus, Athenaeus, Alexander of Egeas, Alexander of Aphrodisias, Themistius, Boethius, and George Trapezuntius), the Epicureans (Velleius, Catius, Pomponius Atticus, Lucretius, Lucianus of Samosata, Philodemus of Gadara, ...), the Pyrrhonians (Cornelius Celsus, Sextus Empiricus, and Sextus of Cheronea), and the Eclectics (Virgil and Horace; Plotinus, Porphyry, and Jamblicus [already cited among the Greek Eclectics, but now subject to a longer discussion], the emperor Julianus, and Diones Chrysostomus).

Having used the Roman philosophers to weld together the Greeks with the more recent thinkers, Capasso groups the subsequent developments of the history of philosophy into 12 sects, partly continuations of the ancient schools, and partly new: the *Pythagorici recentiores*, Platonists, Cynics, Stoics, Peripatetics and Scholastics of all ages, anti-Scholastics and anti-Peripatetics, Eclectics, *Chymici*, *Mathematici*, "Philosophers of uncertain Placing", "emended Epicureans", and Cartesians. Some of the sects of ancient origin (the *Pythagorici recentiores*, among whom we find Apollonius of Tyana and Numenius of Apamea, and the Cynics) are limited to the ancient world; others continue into the modern age, such as the Stoics (thanks to Justus Lipsius), the Platonists and the Peripatetics. He lists a long succession of Platonists, from Heraclitus of Tyre and Dionysius the Areopagite to St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, Synesius of Cyrene, Chosroe king of the Persians, and Theodatus king of the Goths, before moving on to the renaissance Platonists.

As far as the Peripatetics are concerned, Capasso presents an initial series belonging to the period which stretches from the birth of Christ to the High Middle Ages (from Boeto of Sidon and Didymus of Alexandria to Alcuin, Rhabanus Maurus, Scotus Eriugena, and Michael Psellus), then he examines the Arabic philosophers, lingering in particular over Avicenna and Averroes. The *Philosophi Scholastici* are divided, following Horn and others, into three "ages" or "periods": the first goes from Lanfranc, or rather from Abelard and Peter Lombard, up to Albertus Magnus; the second from Albertus to Durand; and the third up to Biel. Four schools are made to arise in the period of middle and new Scholasticism: the Albertists, the Thomists, the Scotists, and the Ockhamists, whose main exponents Capasso examines. There follows finally the large group of the "remaining more recent Peripatetics", belonging to the period from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries: besides the better known followers of Renaissance Aristotelianism and Late Scholasticism, this group includes Angelo Poliziano and Girolamo Savonarola, Rudolph Agricola (Roelof Huysman) and Georg Agricola (Georg Bauer), Lefèvre

d'Étaples, Joh. Gerhard Vossius, Pierre Petit, and Jakob Thomasius, as well as Melanchthon and other Lutherans. For these last thinkers, Capasso made use of a long extract from Buddeus's *Historiae philosophicae succincta delineatio*, from which he took some of the information on the "Mosaic and Christian" and the "Cabbalistic" sects which he did not include in his scheme of classification; in particular, as far as the *Cabbalistae* are concerned, he observes that they do not constitute a sect in their own right, but can be included either amongst the *Chymici*, the Platonists, the Pythagoreans, or other in sects (p. 341).

Capasso deals with the transition to modern philosophy without adding any personal judgement. In presenting the sect of the anti-Scholastics and the anti-Peripatetics – after the lengthy chapter on the Peripatetics – he includes by way of an introduction a passage from Buddeus, which distinguishes the different attitudes of various philosophers at the time of the rebirth of *belles-lettres*: some restricted themselves to merely criticising Scholasticism; others brought some of the ancient sects to life again; still others founded a new philosophy. The first group naturally includes the "anti-Scholastics" (Vives, Valla, Telesio, and Petrus Ramus). Before examining them one by one, Capasso acknowledges his debt to Buddeus: "But who better than you, o most learned Buddeus, could lead the army of the anti-Scholastics, you who profess yourself an Eclectic?" After another quotation from the *Succincta delineatio*, Capasso includes the entire profile of Buddeus (defined as *magnus Philosophiae praeceptor*) which is found in the *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae* by Jonsius-Dornius. From this latter work he also takes a long list of German scholars of the history of philosophy, divided according to University, justifying this digression by the fact that of these writers "most, if not to say all, belong to the anti-Scholastics and the anti-Peripatetics" (pp. 342–346). Among the *Philosophi Eclectici* we find Demonattes and John Stobaeus, St. Jerome and St. Gregory of Nyssa, and then Jacopo Mazzoni, Leone Allacci († 1667) and Daniel Heinsius. The sect of the *Philosophi Chymici* includes among others Giordano Bruno, and is followed by the *Philosophi Mathematici* with writers ranging from Copernicus, "that great father of new Astronomers and restorer of Astronomy", to Newton. The heading "Philosophers of Uncertain Sect, or Writers who belong to a New Sect not clearly recognized" contains the most disparate writers (Fathers of the Church, such as St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nazianzus, medieval authors like Roger of Hereford, and moderns, such as Heurnius, Campanella, Paganino Gaudenzio, Mersenne, Jean Le Clerc, and Spinoza). The final two sects are the *Epicurei emendati, sive Gassendistae*, in which we also find Thomas Hobbes, and the *Philosophi Cartesiani*, among whom are included Arnauld, Malebranche, and Sturmius. The fourteenth and last chapter of Book IV contains a list of European and overseas Universities, and the principal Academies.

4.5.4.3. Our analysis of the problems connected with the periodization and division into sects has already hinted at some of the historiographical positions relating to the origin of philosophy and the transition from one epoch to another. Most historians – notes Capasso when dealing with the theme "On the Inventors of Philosophy" – agree in making Philosophy begin with the Barbarians rather than with the Greeks.

For the Christians, however, it is beyond doubt that Philosophy came into being with Adam, who was at once both the "first Father and the first Sage" (Capasso does not distinguish between "philosophy" and "wisdom"). The ancient Hebrews were therefore "the first inventors and cultivators of Wisdom", which they spread to the other peoples of the Orient. The rigorous concatenation of Barbarian, Greek, Roman, and "More Recent" (in a strict sense) Philosophy seems to lend force to the idea of a continuous progression of the most ancient wisdom through the succession of peoples and historical periods; but we must bear in mind that this link appears less rigorous in the course of the discussion. If in Book I, basing himself in particular on the fantastic juxtapositions made by Huet, Capasso derives the wisdom of the Greek poets and philosophers from the unique source of the books of Moses (identified without hesitation with Mochus) and he affirms, following the Fathers, that Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle all drew their doctrine from Solomon that wisest of men, at the beginning of Book III on the other hand he recognises the peculiarity and the originality of Greek thought: "Although it is clear enough to us from what has been proven above that Wisdom and Philosophy itself flowered first of all among the Hebrews, from whom it then derived to all the peoples of the World, if however we wish to recognize the truth, we must accept that we have taken Philosophy and likewise all the sciences from the Greeks [. . .] I do not in truth deny that Homer and Hesiod who were followed by Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, and others, sailing to Egypt in the year 3000 after the beginning of the world, brought the seeds of all the sciences from there to their own people; but afterwards they themselves cultivated, illustrated, and augmented those seeds in such a way that not without reason are they said and held to be the inventors of Philosophy and of all the sciences. One can add that almost all the Philosophy of the Hebrews and the Barbarians concerned the cult of the Gods or the establishment of correct behaviour; the Greeks, however, besides these Theological and Ethical parts of Philosophy, dealt at length with Physiology" (p. 59).

In the discussion of Barbarian philosophy it is worth noting the space reserved for the Chinese (pp. 41–50), an indication of the interest aroused by La Mothe Le Vayer and the reports made by the Jesuit missionaries (see, in his dedication to John V, Capasso's praise for the missionary activity promoted by the king "to the remotest region of the Chinese Empire", with an explicit reference to the "honorable" Company of Jesus). The Greek philosophers treated at greatest length are, in order: Epicurus (13 pages), Pythagoras (11), Aristotle (7), Socrates, Plato, Zeno the Stoic, and Democritus (4). The remarks made on the various authors contain no particular originality. In analysing the doctrines of Epicurus, Capasso criticises his denial of providence ("But nothing more impious and inept came out of the mouth of Epicurus than the assertion that God does not care for mortals, and that the World is not governed by any Providence of God"), and cites the two opposing interpretations of the concept of *voluptas* without offering an opinion, and stresses – unlike Valletta – that the Epicureans "of all Philosophers are those most opposed to the Christian Religion" (pp. 156, 164–165; on Gassendi's transformation of Epicurus from a "most unreligious Ethnic" to a Christian, see p. 401). Regarding Plato, Capasso notes the conformity (*convenientia*) between his doctrines and those of

Moses, whose works he read in Egypt, and his discovery of the analytical method, "the best of methods" (referring to Diog. Laert. 3, 24). "It is not yet clear enough what Plato thought of as Ideas", he observes, and refers to the writings of Syrianus, G.F. Pico, and Francesco Giorgio (Zorzi) Veneto. His doctrine of the "Most Holy Triad" is also judged to be less than clear, and here the discussion refers back to the works of Petavius and Cudworth (pp. 91–93). As far as Aristotle is concerned, Capasso does not distance himself from contemporary judgements: the Stagirite, that is, reached perfection in logic and ethics, but in physics he made use of principles which were too general, principles with which it is impossible "to explain the natural phenomenon. [. . .] In the Physics of Aristotle there is this fault, that material things are examined in a metaphysical rather than a physical way" (pp. 103–106).

In his discussion Capasso also includes the theory of "Spinozism", which he refers to in dealing with Xenophanes ("Those most learned men, Bale [. . .] and Buddeus, [. . .] note that the doctrine of Spinoza which holds that in the whole of the universe there is only one substance, is derived from this doctrine of Xenophanes": p. 144). The theme of the "Italic" birth of Pythagoras, on the other hand, which was so dear to Valletta and Gimma, is absent from the *Synopsis*; indeed the Italic sect is presented without any concession to patriotic pride. The first of the Roman philosophers is Numa Pompilius, who receives lengthy treatment as an exemplary figure (in the introductory dedication, John V had already been compared to this ancient Roman king for his religious piety and love of peace). Capasso mentions the *vulgaris opinio* which holds Numa to be a follower of Pythagoras and he quotes the objections against the idea, but here too he avoids adopting a clear position on the subject, merely observing that the affinity in metaphysical, ethical, and political doctrines could lead the second king of Rome to be considered a Pythagorean (p. 179). The most famous Roman philosophers (Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, Virgil, and Cicero) are granted more space than Socrates or Plato, due to their more general historical and cultural – as well as educational and moral – interest.

The Arabs are presented as those who made philosophy "live again" and the study of letters "flower again" after the decline of such studies in Greece and Italy. They were followed by the Scholastics, who were "led by their love of dispute rather than inquiry into the truth" and who embraced the doctrine of Aristotle "with their eyes closed", defending it "as they would their homes and temples". Capasso declares that he does not intend to treat the "immense and limitless ocean" of Scholasticism in its entirety (which would constitute a "question as vast as it is thorny, which has been debated for around five centuries without its having been settled"), but that he will limit himself to examining the founders and the principal exponents of the various sects, "lest anything be seen to be lacking from this Synopsis of Philosophical History so that it may give a perfect account of Philosophy and the Philosophers" (p. 295).

Far more interesting from our point of view is the discussion of modern thought; here it is Descartes who receives the lion's share of the attention, so to speak, with a lengthy presentation of his logical, metaphysical, physical, and ethical doctrines, in such a way as to meet a demand for information which had arisen for various

reasons: "As many erudite men and above all Mathematicians have embraced this recent Sect of Philosophy, spread throughout almost the whole length of Europe, and the minds and pens of all the doctors of our age have been tired either defending or attacking it, and since many have no leisure to study in depth the doctrine of this sect, either because they are engaged in the study of other sciences or because they have lost the right to read the philosophical works of Descartes because they have been prohibited by the Roman Index, I judged it would be worthwhile if I were to place before their eyes a summary of this Philosophical Doctrine" (p. 409). The discussion, which also takes into consideration the views of the Cartesians, and in particular Malebranche, goes up to p. 446 and ends with an "epitome of an epitome", that is to say, a further shorter summary of a page and a half, taken from Buddeus. Most of the space is given over to physics, which takes up pages 417–442; in illustrating the question of the soul of beasts, "so debated by both ancient and more recent Philosophers", Capasso also refers to other works on the subject, above all Gómez Pereira's *Antoniana Margarita* (pp. 438–439).

Of the other modern thinkers, it is Paracelsus who receives the most lengthy treatment; Capasso dwells at length on the "most wicked raving", the "Arcane Chemical doctrines", and the medico-naturalistic theories of this singular character, whose research into the philosopher's stone was of great topical interest in the early eighteenth century (pp. 365–371). A relatively large amount of space is also devoted to Spinoza and Hobbes (about four pages each), while Bruno, Campanella, Bacon, and Galileo are treated in a page or slightly more, just like many other thinkers relatively unknown today. Spinoza is placed, as we have said, among the philosophers of an uncertain classification and the founders of a new sect "of no great importance". He was the first to teach atheism "with a new method and System, although the main dogmas of his doctrine were common to both ancient and more recent European and Oriental philosophy". Capasso describes in detail the humble existence and the virtuous lifestyle of this Dutch philosopher. Among Spinoza's "impious and virulent" writings he cites above all the *Lucii Antistii Constantis de Jure Ecclesiasticorum liber singularis* (the stress on this work in particular, which at the time was attributed to Spinoza, has been interpreted as an indication of the interest in jurisdictionalistic theories which Capasso may have shared with his brother Nicola: cf. Zambelli, *La formazione*, p. 99). Capasso mentions the geometrical method and quotes in full the definitions, axioms, and propositions upon which the *Ethics* is based, ending with a list of writers who took up their pen against Spinoza (pp. 394–399).

The other "negative" figure of modern thought, Giordano Bruno, is the object of less attention: the biographical data is kept to a minimum, there is no discussion of his doctrines, and Capasso merely recalls the accusation brought by many against Descartes of having taken his theory of vortices from Bruno (p. 377). Less negative, compared to Valletta's condemnation at least, is Capasso's verdict on Thomas Hobbes: the accusation of atheism is considered to be a calumny, even though a little further on, in a passage on the doctrines contained in the "impious" *Leviathan* and in Hobbes' other works, Capasso specifies that "if not an Atheist, then he is to be called at least an Irreligious, and the author of new and impious opinions against religion".

Capasso realises the difficulty of cataloguing Hobbes's doctrines, but he refuses to admit that this English philosopher can be said to constitute a category in his own right: "Thus it is worth noting that the sect which is called Hobbesian, after the name of its founder, is to be understood as referring only to moral philosophy: indeed it cannot be said that he established a specific system in Physics and Metaphysics. Since he was in accord neither with Aristotle nor Descartes, nor created any new System, his field of research being in common with that of Gassendi with whom he had a certain resemblance, we consider him to be rightly placed among the Gassendians" (pp. 403–405).

Amongst contemporary thinkers, the most significant presence is that of Newton, who is mentioned at the end of the chapter on the "Mathematical Philosophers", but who is considered just as much to be the founder of his own school. Capasso mentions the death, which had taken place only a few months earlier (20th March, 1727), of this "great Philosopher and leader of the more Recent Philosophers in England", who "thought out a new system of philosophizing, with which he opposed the Cartesian System, and which earned him both great fame and authority in his own country". "This way of philosophizing", Capasso stresses further on, "is spread not only through England, but throughout almost all the length and breadth of Europe: indeed this Newtonian System seems to everybody to constitute the right way and the rule of philosophizing". The impressive diffusion of Newtonianism, equal only to that of Cartesianism in the preceding decades, induces Capasso to provide if not a "perfect summary" then at least a "brief idea" of the "vast and difficult" philosophy of Newton, whose opposition to the Cartesian method is stressed from the beginning ("While to philosophize by means of Hypotheses, as done by Descartes, is more in conformity with fantasy than with reason, the laws of Nature, which when applied to the most obscure phenomena can explain them, are to be deduced rather from the clear and certain Phenomena themselves and from Experiments": p. 387). This "brief idea" comes then to constitute a sort of rival project to the vast "epitome" of the philosophical and scientific system which had monopolized European culture. Capasso, yet again, fails to take up a position in this clash of the Titans, since this is not the task of the historian of philosophy: "But examining whether this System of philosophizing is in accordance with reason is not the job of the Historian". He prefers rather to remind the reader that a "most diligent" examination of Newton's theories had been carried out at the University of Naples 30 years earlier by his own master, Nicola Cirillo, "honour of our Naples, and ornament of the Royal Society of London, of which he was recently made a member" (p. 388).

4.5.4.4. Capasso's work seems to be inspired by three methodological principles: completeness, a systematic approach, and the use of the "historical" method. Completeness does not only mean extending his inquiry to the whole scope of human thought, but also overcoming the purely biographical or diadochistic approach, in such a way as to arrive at a uniform discussion. Significant in this respect is an observation made in the *Prooemium*, which repeats the criticism made of previous histories of philosophy (already expressed in the preface, see above, para 4.5.3), but from the point of view of the structure more than

the content: "Many deal with the Origin of Philosophy and its Inventors; a great many set out the Lives of the Philosophers; finally, a huge number consider the Sects of the Philosophers" (p. 1). Capasso puts his idea into practice beginning with Greek philosophy, by means of a chronologically organized succession of profiles of individual philosophers within the framework of the sects, which is continued up to the discussion of the modern period. This rigidly classificatory approach lends itself to inconsistencies and overlap, above all in the division of writers into "Romans" and "More Recents": Boethius and Trapezuntius, for example, are placed among the Roman Peripatetics, while the list of subsequent Peripatetics, which opens with Boetus of Sidon, takes us right back into the Imperial Age. Just as in the general structure, the need for systematic (*methodice*) treatment is also apparent in the individual profiles or "portraits": in the case of the less important or less interesting writers the information given is limited to the biographical, with some judgements taken from the most authoritative sources; for the others there is a proper "file" which also includes a list of works and a synthesis of the doctrines, and which ends with further bibliographical references (in addition to the sources used in the text) for the reader who should require more information on the philosopher in question. In some cases (Pythagoras, the Stoics, the Eclectics, the *Chymici*, and Descartes), the discussion of the doctrines constitutes a section in its own right.

The historical approach (*historico more*), which Capasso refers to on more than one occasion, consists of an objective and neutral discussion: Capasso devotes much space to the quotation of sources, and he reviews the various judgements made on the philosopher in question, both positive and negative, without usually expressing his own opinion. The sources are given one after another in an unconnected order, without any philological or historical discussion: from this point of view, Capasso shows no indications of having learnt the methodological lesson of Bayle, whose *Dictionnaire* he nevertheless used more than once, together with the analogous work by Moréri. The nature of the work as a compendium for didactic purposes, however, excludes in principle any form of direct authorial intervention which would render the discussion more problematic and detailed. Capasso demonstrates a sound knowledge of the modern historico-philosophical literature; he frequently uses Jonsius-Dornius, and, for more recent thought, Buddeus, but he also turns to Hornius, Vossius, Pereira, de Launoy, Rapin, Huet's *Demonstratio evangelica* and Olearius' dissertations, Morhof, Heereboord, and the Italian Cozzando. He is also aware of the *Acta Philosophorum*, since he refers the reader to this journal for more information on Lipsius (p. 287).

4.5.5. The *Synopsis* was bought and made known to the editors of the *Acta Eruditorum* by Pietro Giannone, who was living in Vienna at the time, and who was the journal's main correspondent for Italian news (he also had close relations with Nicola Capasso). The review which appeared in 1730 gives a detailed account of the contents and concludes by giving Capasso the credit for having opened up to the Italians an area of research which up until then only few had been interested in. The reviewer – who according to Cassius' biography (see below, Chapter 6, para 6.2.11.) was Heumann himself – points out that Capasso also quotes the

Acta Philosophorum, even though the language barrier prevented him from using this journal. "Certainly", adds the reviewer with benevolent irony, "if he had only read what he [= Heumann] wrote about the philosophy of the Patriarchs and the Hebrews, it would have happened that he would either have repudiated many of the old opinions or energetically refuted this author" (AE, May, 1730, pp. 221–222). In the same period (1734) Capasso's work was read with great interest and summarized by the young Antonio Genovesi, who had received it from his friend Claudio Borrello. It is also used as a source in Tafuri's history of Southern Italian philosophy (see above, intro.), and is mentioned in the introduction to Corsini's *Historiae philosophicae Synopsis*, where, after expressing a generally praiseworthy opinion, the author stops to consider some of the work's naïve assumptions in its discussion of barbarian philosophy, due to Capasso's acritical acceptance of his sources: "Indeed I fear that what this most famous Author evokes regarding the science of Abraham, the Christian religion preached to the Chinese by St. Thomas the Apostle and other information on China, and the Temple consecrated in Chartres to the "Virgin who will bear a child" in the age of Caesar Augustus, according to a prophecy of the Druids, cannot be proved by more severe critics and prudent men". Corsini goes on by quoting the fantastic hypothesis of a relationship between Pythagoras and the "Carmelites" founded by Elijah and Elisha, and he corrects the chronology of some philosophers, as well as the idea that Galileo was born an "illegitimate child" (Corsini, *Institutiones*, p. 31; cf. Capasso, *Historiae Philosophiae Synopsis*, pp. 11, 49, 58, 127, 381). Buonafede in turn places Capasso among the few Italian authors of works on the history of philosophy and notes that he was the only one to have thought of writing an "entire history", even though "by mixing together much erudition and much credulity" he "greatly diminished the dignity and reliability of the history" (Buonafede, *Della istoria*, I, p. xxxviii, where some of Corsini's remarks are reiterated). The *Synopsis* remained unnoticed by both Brucker and Tennemann, however. It enjoyed a certain diffusion among Portuguese cultural circles: five exemplars of the work are to be found in the libraries of Lisbon, while in his *Theses* (1753), Carlos da Anunciação recommends Capasso together with Stanley as one of the fundamental writers on the history of philosophy.

Conceived of as a preparatory manual to the systematic teaching of philosophy, based on a need which had already been felt with regard to the philosophical text books of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the *Synopsis* transcends its aim in the scope of its treatment, making it a complete work in its own right, very unlike the profiles which were usually placed at the beginning of institutional treatises on philosophy, such as the homonymous *Synopsis* by Corsini. It can rightly be considered the first general history of philosophy to appear in Italy: contemporaneous with the text books by Gentzken, Reinhard, and Lamezan (see below, Chapter 7), the work is inspired by Dutch, French, and German literature on the history of philosophy, testifying to the openness of early eighteenth-century Neapolitan culture towards the most progressive cultural areas of Europe. Of particular interest is Capasso's eclecticism, which marks the transition from an already outdated Cartesianism and which has features in common with the more elaborate German

philosophia eclectica. Braun's verdict (presenting the *Synopsis* as a simple "compilation", and noting that "no serious treatise existed when Cromaziano conceived of his plan to provide Italy with a history of philosophy worthy of the name": Braun, p. 202), is therefore reductive and seems to have been conditioned by the criticisms of Cromaziano himself, who was interested in stressing the absolute "novelty" of his own history of philosophy. As regards the limits noted by Motzo (the use of extrinsic criteria in the division of the work, which mean that the characteristic features of each period are lost; the lack of emphasis on the "great figures" with respect to the "crowd of minor ones"; or the fact that the author never goes beyond the "limits of erudite history", etc.), these spring more from an idealistic reading of the work than from a comparison with other historiographical works of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Nevertheless, the importance of the *Synopsis* should not be overestimated outside its "natural" collocation, as Ricuperati tends to do: "In evaluating the work one should not forget that, written for a sovereign, it implicitly puts forward a model of enlightened political culture" (DBI, XVIII, p. 397). This judgement gives excessive weight to the themes in the dedication, which do not fundamentally influence the contents of the *Synopsis* and which are in any case to be traced back to the classical ideals inherited from the Renaissance. If anything, it is worth noting that the tone of the dedication to John V lends itself in hindsight to a comparison with the enlightened despotism which was introduced in Portugal under the reign of Joseph I: our good Giambattista Capasso could certainly not have imagined that the future king of Portugal, to whom he offers as a model the figure of the most religious John V, great builder of churches and monasteries, was to have the marquis of Pombal as a minister.

4.5.6. On Capasso's life and works: G. De Micillis, *Vita di Nicolò Capasso*, in N. Capasso, *Opere* (Naples, 1811), pp. xiff.; P.E. Tulelli, *Intorno alla vita e alle opere filosofiche di G.B. Capasso e di T. Rossi* (Naples, 1857); P. Martorana, *Notizie biografiche e bibliografiche degli scrittori del dialetto napoletano* (Naples, 1874), pp. 80–81; G. Ricuperati, *Capasso, Giambattista*, DBI, XVIII, pp. 396–397.

On the fortune of his works: BR, I (1728), p. 436; AE, May, 1730, pp. 217–222; Corsini, *Institutiones*, p. 31; Buonafede, *Della istoria*, I, p. xxxviii; Degérando, I, pp. 126–127; J. Pereira Gomes, *Os começos da Historiografia Filosófica em Portugal* (Lisbon, 1956), pp. 10 and 26–27; Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica di A. Genovesi*, pp. 95–104 and 809; Ricuperati, *L'esperienza civile e religiosa di P. Giannone*, p. 371.

On the criticism: R. Bobba, *Saggio*, pp. 176–188; V. Lilla, "Un italiano scrisse il primo trattato di storia della filosofia universale", *Atti della R. Accademia Peloritana*, XX (1905–1906), pp. 221–227; Natali, *Il Settecento*, pp. 371–372, 451; Motzo Dentice d'Accadia, "Intorno alla storia della filosofia", pp. 90–95; Croce, "La 'Istoria filosofica' di G. Valletta", p. 215 note; Garin, pp. 999–1001 and 1013; Comparato, "Ragione e fede nelle 'Discussioni istoriche, teologiche e filosofiche' di C. Grimaldi", pp. 91–92; Garin, *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo*, pp. 224–225; Rak, p. 123 note; Braun, pp. 202 and 377; Del Torre, p. 55 note; Lojacono, *Immagini di René Descartes*, pp. 129 and 168.

4.6 Odoardo Corsini (1702–1765)

Institutiones philosophicae

4.6.1. Odoardo (Edoardo) Corsini was one of the major cultural figures of early eighteenth-century Italy. Born on the 4th October, 1702, in Fanano in the Duchy of Modena, he entered the Order of the Piarists as a child and studied in Florence, showing an aptitude for geometry and above all for *belles-lettres*. For almost 30 years, however, he was officially occupied in the teaching of philosophical disciplines, firstly in the school of the Piarists in Florence (from 1723) and then at the University of Pisa where he was called to teach logic in 1735; in 1746 he was promoted to the chair of metaphysics and moral philosophy. His passion for classical antiquities began in Pisa, thanks to the influence of his learned confrère Alessandro Politi, and from then onwards he devoted himself entirely to erudition. After the death of Politi (1752), Corsini succeeded him to the chair of *belles-lettres*, which he became so fond of that he refused the post of librarian offered by Francesco III of Modena after the death of Muratori. Elected Master General of the Piarists in 1754, he was forced to leave Pisa for 6 years, until the time when he was able to return to the teaching of his favourite subjects. He was on terms with the great Italian scholars of the period and in particular with Scipione Maffei (who gave him 300 Greek inscriptions to translate into Latin, in Verona in 1751) and Muratori. He died of apoplexy on the 30th November, 1765.

4.6.2. The complete catalogue of Corsini's works, established by Tiraboschi, lists 25 printed and 7 unprinted works. These mostly concern Greek erudition (history, chronology, epigraphy, and numismatics), such as his great *Fasti Attici* (Florence, 1744–1761, 4 vols) and his *Dissertationes IV Agonisticae* (Florence, 1747) on the Olympics and other ancient Greek games. Corsini also produced an edition of the Pseudo-Plutarchian *Placita philosophorum*, with a translation into Latin: Plutarchi *De Placitis philosophorum libri V, latine reddidit, recensuit, adnotationibus, variantibus lectionibus, dissertationibus illustravit* Eduardus Corsinus (Florence: ex Imp. Typographico, 1750). The work includes a life of Plutarch and two dissertations: the first deals with the obscure passages in the treatise, and the second with a comparison between the doctrines of the ancients, as they are given in Plutarch, and those of the *recentiores* (pp. xliv–lxiii). In the second, Corsini refuses the principle of contrasting the theories of the ancients with those of the moderns, since there is no philosopher who has not discovered some truth that was unknown by the others. He points out that "the Ancients, whom we sometimes freely and audaciously tend to translate, to despise, and to deride, were certainly, in their love of inquiring into the truth and exploring the nature of physical things, so perspicacious, so wise, and so fortunate, that sometimes they found the truth itself and the true causes of some effects; and they so outshone more recent scholars in many things that many of their opinions, which are thought to have been found first in our age, were handed down from the Ancients, set out, proven, and illustrated, almost with the same reasons" (*De placitis*, p. xlv). This *dissertatio* is divided into five short "books" following the division of the *Placita philosophorum*, in which Corsini points out the analogies

between the thought of the ancients and that of the moderns, organised according to various themes (the laws of attraction, the theory of vortices, the infinity of the world, the origin and the motion of the comets, the incorporeity and the immortality of the soul, the division between primary and secondary qualities, the nature of colours, etc). In particular it is worth noting the affinity which Corsini finds between Aristotle, the Stoics, and Locke on the theme "of the origin of ideas and knowledge" (p. lv).

Also of interest from the point of view of the history of philosophy is the second of the *Dissertationes quinque, quibus antiqua quaedam insignia monumenta illustrantur*, contained in volumes VI-VII of the collection *Symbolae litterariae* edited by the famous Etruscan scholar Anton Francesco Gori (Rome, 1751–1754). This second dissertation is entitled *De natali die Platonis, ejus aetate, et in Italiam itineribus*, and according to Natali it gave Vincenzo Cuoco the idea for his opera *Platone in Italia* (1804–1806). Corsini also wrote a short history of philosophy, which he placed at the beginning of his *Institutiones philosophicae, ac mathematicae ad usum Scholarum Piarum*, which were printed for the first time in Florence by Paperini in 1731–1737, in 6 vols. This youthful work is a textbook of philosophy and it belongs to the period when Corsini taught in the schools of his order in Florence. It was republished on more than one occasion: Bologna 1741, 1742; Venice 1743, 1764 (we refer here to this latter edition, printed by Remondini in 7 vols). Volume I, on logic, opens with a preface ("Auctor lectori suo", pp. v–xix) and a general introduction to philosophy, divided typographically into two parts: the "In universam philosophiam Praefatio, de nomine, origine, incremento, partibus ac praestantia Philosophiae; atque de methodo, qua comparari illa debet" ("Preface to the whole of philosophy, on the name, the origin, the development, the parts and the excellence of Philosophy; and on the method which it must apply"), divided into 49 paragraphs (pp. 1–29), and a "Historiae philosophicae Synopsis, in qua sectarum omnium divisio, ac series demonstratur" ("Synopsis of philosophical history, in which the division of all sects and their succession is demonstrated"), pp. 30–60, with a synoptic table. Besides this "Synopsis", paragraphs iv–xxxvi of the "In universam philosophiam praefatio", which deal with the "origin" and the "development" of philosophy, also treat the theme of the history of philosophy (pp. 3–22).

4.6.3. On a theoretical level, Corsini tends towards eclecticism: ever since he was a student, notes Tiraboschi, he "showed an aversion to Peripatetic doctrines, and he much preferred the method of the ancient Academics of seeking the truth free of partisan spirit" (*Biblioteca Modenese*, II, p. 144). Such is the spirit that inspires the *Institutiones philosophicae*, which opens with a significant passage from Clement of Alexandria: "I call Philosophy not Stoic, nor Platonic, nor Epicurean and Aristotelian, but whatever was rightly said by these Sects which teaches justice with pious science, all that which can be chosen I call philosophy". Corsini explains his position in the preface to the reader, where he observes that no philosopher and no sect possess the whole truth or is free from error, and he states that "it is certainly necessary to make a sortie into the remaining Sects as well, like a deserter, and

to investigate the doctrines of other philosophers" (*Institutiones*, I, pp. vii–ix). He therefore criticises existing textbooks for their one-sided approach: they do not provide the "elements of all philosophy", but only those of the Cartesian or Peripatetic doctrine, as if philosophy were confined within the limits of Peripateticism or Cartesianism (I, p. xiii). Further on, dealing with the "method" of philosophy, Corsini expresses his high regard for the school of the Eclectics, "because it seems that in it those statements of the philosophers which are in disaccord can be more easily reconciled, and can be unified in some kind of alliance", and he considers such a method particularly suitable "for ingenuous young people [. . .] because it contains the most illustrious opinions of the ancient and the more recent philosophers briefly, accurately, and clearly" (I, p. 27).

It must be pointed out that these remarks, although highly significant as far as historiography is concerned, refer here to the systematic part of the work, and not to the "Historiae philosophicae Synopsis" which is placed at the beginning, and which has a merely auxiliary function. The "Synopsis" is presented by Corsini as a completion of the "Praefatio": he stresses the usefulness of a classification of philosophers which enables one to be able to identify immediately, on the basis of the character of each sect, the doctrines and method of an author, and to avoid confusion between philosophers who share the same name but who belong to different sects. Corsini recalls with praise those who "wrote the History of Philosophy in such a way that in their books the division of the sects, the ages, and the succession of philosophers are clearly shown", and he mentions the names of Hornius, Jonsius, Gassendi, Vossius, and Stanley, from whom (as well as from Diogenes Laertius) he claims to have taken the material for his own compilation (*Institutiones*, I, "Synopsis", pp. 30–31). He also mentions the recent work by Capasso, pausing to point out some of the errors contained in it (see above, para 4.5.5.). This brief introduction to the "Synopsis" closes with an examination of the correspondences between the various systems of chronology.

4.6.4. *Institutiones philosophicae*

4.6.4.1. The 33 paragraphs of the historical part of the "In universam philosophiam Praefatio" bear no title; they contain frequent quotations and the sources are noted at the foot of the page. The following "Historiae philosophicae Synopsis" opens with an introduction devoid of any title (pp. 30–35), and consists of a list, numbered successively, of 170 Greek philosophers divided into 14 sects: the Ionian sect (from Thales to Socrates), the Socratic schools (the Cyrenaic, Eliac, Megaric, Academic, and Cynic), and the Stoic, Italic (Pythagoras), Pythagorean (Empedocles, Archytas, Timaeus . . .), Eleatic, Pyrrhonic, Peripatetic, Epicurean, and Eclectic sects. Essential information is provided for each philosopher: chronology, family relations, the school to which they belonged, and the distinction from any other philosopher of the same name. Corsini quotes his sources in the body of the text and compares them in the questions of chronology, making frequent corrections (on pp. 35 and 40, for example, he points out two of Stanley's errors in the dating of

Thales and Plato). The list of philosophers is repeated in a schematic form in the *tabula* provided. These 14 pages are followed by a heterogeneous list of "Sages who do not fall into any sect" (pp. 57–60), a collection in chronological order of characters from the remotest Antiquity to the seventeenth century: Job, Hermes Trismegistus, Moses, Linus, Zoroaster, Homer, the Seven Sages, Aesop, Pindar, Herodotus, Aristophanes, Hippocrates, Confucius, Aratus, Archimedes, Cicero, Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Seneca, Pliny, Ptolemy, Plutarch, Galen, Justin (who is said to be of the *secta Platonicus*, however), Clement of Alexandria, Lactantius, Macrobius, St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, Ockham, Copernicus, Tico Brahe, Galileo, Gassendi, and Descartes. Only the basic personal details are given for these "sages".

4.6.4.2. The "Synopsis", as we have seen, is based on a rigorous division into sects; the "Praefatio", in turn, does not stress the division into periods, but three fundamental periods nevertheless emerge from a reading of this summary: pre-Greek philosophy, Greek philosophy (which includes the sects derived from Aristotle and lasts "up until today"), and modern philosophy, "a certain new kind of philosophy", which began with Bacon and Galileo (*Institutiones*, I, "Praefatio", p. 22).

4.6.4.3. Given its auxiliary role, the "Synopsis" does not present any historiographical interpretations. Nevertheless, the discussion of the origin and the "development" of philosophy, however brief, includes several clarifications. Corsini observes that philosophy, even though its name was created by Pythagoras, is much more ancient than the Greeks. It flowered amongst the *barbarae gentes* and indeed began with the first man, who passed it on to his descendants. The author rejects, however, the theory of Huet and Alexandre Noël whereby "all study of wisdom" derived from the single source of the Hebrews, since the Bible was not translated into Greek until the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus. The affinities between the laws of Moses and those of Solon and Lycurgus depend if anything on the fact that such laws originated "from the innate light of reason, and from the love of right and honesty, which is found by nature in all human hearts" (*Institutiones*, I, "Praefatio", pp. 6–8). Corsini also criticises the *similitudo* which Huet describes between the myths of the pagan poets and the characters and vicissitudes of the Bible. From Egypt and Phoenicia the *studium sapientiae* was transmitted to the Greeks, who divided into several rivulets the "source of wisdom, which in the beginning was one". Among the most ancient scholars of physics he also cites the poets Linus, Musaeus, and Orpheus, "whose real existence we defend with Burnet and others, against Aristotle and Vossius, even though we concede that the fragments of works attributed to them are apocryphal". Touching on the division into sects, Corsini notes that the most illustrious of these were the Italic, the Ionian, and the Eleatic. He emphasizes the revival of Epicureanism carried out by Gassendi, who "has virtually occupied the principal place among the more recent philosophers". The medieval age is dealt with in only 15 lines, with a reference to the vicissitudes of Aristotelianism, following de Launoy. Paragraph xxxvi, the last of this historical *excursus*, is devoted to the scientific discoveries of the *recentiores*, who seem to have exceeded the glory of the

ancients with their innumerable experiments and observations (*Institutiones*, I, pp. 13–14, 20, 22).

4.6.4.4. In the *Institutiones philosophicae* the historical discussion is carried out along traditional lines. The part that has an autonomous structure, the "Synopsis", is in fact a simple historical *tabula*, while the presentation of the origin and the "development" of philosophy takes place within the context of a general introduction to the philosophical disciplines, as Villemandy, for example, had done more than half a century earlier. This presentation merely outlines the development of the various sects, without providing any information on their doctrinal content. This latter information can be found in the systematic discussion, which again takes up the method of comparing the *placita* of the various philosopers, as in Du Hamel's *De consensu*. Thus the "Disputatio de principiis metaphysicis" sets out one after the other the *opiniones* of Pythagoras, Xenophanes, Parmenides, Melissus, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle; the theme of the *principia mechanica* is discussed with lengthy quotations on Anaxagoras, Leucippus, Democritus, Epicurus, Gassendi, and Descartes; and there is a series of ancient or modern opinions in the question *de motu*, etc. (*Institutiones*, II, pp. 25–61 and 273ff.). It must be born in mind, furthermore, that the various sections of the manual, such as logic and physics, are also preceded by their own "Praefatio de origine, incremento, praestantia, obiecto et natura", which are not lacking in historical references.

4.6.5. Although only a work destined for the classroom, the *Institutiones* did not go unnoticed in Italian cultural circles. The observations it contains on probabilism immediately gave rise to some satirical references in the *Sermones* of the Jesuit Giulio Cesare Cordara, while in his work *Della pubblica felicità* (1749), Muratori quotes Corsini among the modern authors on logic who wrote "better books with a more effective and direct method" than the Peripatetic one (see also his letter to Genovesi, dated the 18th May, 1747, where Corsini is remembered as one of the writers thanks to whom "some solid logic and metaphysics has been published in Italy too"). Genovesi in turn mentions Corsini's pneumatology in the second edition of his *Ars logico-critica* (1749), and in an unpublished work of 1765 he rejects the accusation of eclecticism brought against Corsini by the *Acta Regiae Hancaranae Scholae* published in Bologna by Pasquale Copeti. The *Institutiones* were reviewed in the *Nova acta eruditorum*, which also mentioned the "Synopsis" in a positive light: "indeed it is almost superfluous to say much about History, as up to now very famous men have made a great effort to explain it at length; nevertheless, the Author must undoubtedly be praised for this, that he has set out all the types of sects and successions with an elegant and very convenient table in such a way that the origin, propagation, and main representatives of all the sects, which flowered one after the other, can be observed in one glance by the eyes and the souls of the readers" (NAE, 1739, p. 185). Absent from the "Dissertatio praeliminaris", Corsini is noted by Brucker in the volume of supplements to his *Historia critica* (Brucker, VI, p. 30).

4.6.6. On Corsini's life and works: G. Tiraboschi, *Biblioteca Modenese*, II (Modena, 1782), pp. 144–151; DBI, XXIX, pp. 620–625; *Padre Odoardo Corsini. Un fananese del XVIII secolo al servizio della scuola, della cultura e della fede*, ed. R. Rossi Ercolani (Livorno, 2003).

On the fortune of his works: BI, XII (1731), p. 212; XIII (1732), p. 253; NAE, 1739, pp. 184–192 (on the *Institutiones*); 1754, pp. 225–233 (on the *De placitis philosophorum*); L. Sectani [pseud. for G. C. Cordara], *De tota Graeculorum huius aetatis litteratura ad Gaium Salmorium sermones quattuor* (Geneva, 1737), s*ermo* I and III; Muratori, *Opere*, II, p. 1998; Brucker, VI, p. 30. Cf. also: G. Natali, *Cultura e poesia in Italia nell'età napoleonica* (Turin, 1930), p. 299; Venturi, *Settecento riformatore*, pp. 533–535; Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica di A. Genovesi*, pp. 151, 154–155, 728–729, 745; L. Giacobbe, "L'influsso filosofico e pedagogico di O. Corsini nel Settecento illuministico del Centro Europa", in *Padre Odoardo Corsini. Un fananese del XVIII secolo*, pp. 83–89.

On the criticism: Bobba, *Saggio*, pp. 209–263; Garin, p. 999; C. Manzoni, *I cartesiani italiani*, pp. 77–80; Tolomio, *Italorum sapientia*, pp. 110–112; A. Savorelli, "La filosofia", in *Storia dell'Università di Pisa*, II/2: *1737–1861* (Pisa, 2000), pp. 574–582; G. Piaia, " 'Cercare il vero senza spirito di partito'. La 'lezione' filosofica di Odoardo Corsini", in *Padre Odoardo Corsini. Un fananese del XVIII secolo*, pp. 73–81.

Part II
The General Histories of Philosophy in Germany

Chapter 5
The History of Philosophy from Eclecticism to Pietism

Francesco Bottin and Mario Longo

Introduction

Mario Longo

In the area of philosophy, early eighteenth-century Germany shows a plurality of tendencies and influences which cannot easily be reduced to a single theme. The penetration of European thought – French, Dutch and above all English – was counter-balanced in academic culture by the persistence of the Aristotelian Scholastic tradition, which ever since the time of Melancthon had become the official philosophy of the Lutheran universities. Leibniz's philosophical writings, which culminated in his *Essais de Théodicée* (1710), came to an end in the same period in which Wolff's thought was taking shape and coherence, giving Leibniz's philosophy a particular interpretation and systemization. However, the period from 1690 to 1720 was characterized above all by the figure of Christian Thomasius and his work in renewing philosophical culture, which he considered to have an essentially practical foundation and purpose. For this reason, Thomasius's activity in the philosophical and juridical fields was integral to his anti-conformist stance, his polemic against pedantry and the narrow-mindedness of academic circles, and his criticism of popular prejudices, superstitions, and beliefs.[1] Thomasius

F. Bottin (✉)
Università di Padova, Dipartimento di Filosofia, Piazza Capitaniato 3, 35139 Padova, Italy
e-mail: francesco.bottin@unipd.it

M. Longo (✉)
Università di Verona, Dipartimento di Filosofia, Pedagogia e Psicologia, Lungadige Porta Vittoria 17, 37132 Verona, Italy
e-mail: mario.longo@univr.it

[1]Cf. Hazard, p. 176: "Nothing, perhaps, is more characteristic of Thomasius than this practical intervention of his; it is a sort of outward and visible sign of his zeal for justice and humanity practical aspect. Here he takes up, in concrete terms, the defence of justice and of humanity [...]. He was a glorious promoter of the German Enlightenment, a hero of the great battle waged by the luminaries of reason". This interpretation of the figure of Thomasius is reflected in the evaluation of the origins and significance of the Enlightenment in Germany; cf. H.M. Wolff, *Die Weltanschauung der deutschen Aufklarüng in geschichtlicher Entwicklung*, 2nd edn. (Bern and

G. Piaia, G. Santinello (eds.), *Models of the History of Philosophy*, International Archives of the History of Ideas, Archives internationales d'histoire des idées,
DOI 10.1007/978-90-481-9507-7_5, © Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2011

was much followed and imitated: the representatives of the "first generation" of the *Aufklärung*, from Gundling to Buddeus and Rüdiger, all, to a varying extent, felt his influence.[2]

His contemporaries saw Thomasius as an innovator: Heumann compared his work with that of Luther for having freed the field of philosophical research from the bonds of authority and for having directed it towards the discovery of human happiness (cf. below, Chapter 6, para 6.2). In opposition to metaphysics, an empty learning of useless abstractions, Thomasius placed the study of "practical" disciplines: ethics, law, and politics, which have an immediate connection and relevance to men's lives. The philosophical method too is based on man's understanding of himself, on his "natural" capacity for acting and thinking, moving from the simple to the complex, from the individual to the universal, from sensation to idea: "Sensations are passive thoughts (*die leidenden Gedanken*) of the mind, ideas are active thoughts (*die thätigen Gedanken*). The former are concerned directly with individuals, the latter with the universals. The former are the beginning of human understanding, the latter follow after them".[3] Anything that cannot be traced back to experience is excluded from philosophical knowledge, like, for example, the nature of God, the soul and, in general, that of substances; the field in which rational activity can be most effectively explained is that which studies man's actions, his moral and social behaviour.

The philosophical renewal led by Ch. Thomasius took place, to a large extent, within academic culture. It was in this context that the resumption of the genre of "philosophical history", which through the work of Thomasius himself became a permanent part of the university curriculum, took place.[4] Johann Franz Buddeus' *Historiae philosophicae succincta delineatio*, the introduction to his *Elementa philosophiae instrumentalis* (Halle, 1703), enjoyed a wide circulation, even abroad, and remained the fundamental text for the university teaching of the history of philosophy until the appearance of the text books by Gentzken, Reinhard, and Heineccius.

However, the characteristics of German philosophical historiography are not to be understood as an indication of backwardness compared with contemporary French historiography. In eighteenth-century Germany the university system

---

Munich, 1963), p. 24: "The Enlightenment battle against erudite philosophy does not lead to a rejection of philosophy in general; the aim of this new cultural movement is to make philosophy useful for life and hence, from the point of view of a worldly *Weltanschauung*, to fill the gap produced by the weakening of religion and tradition. The German thinker who waged this battle against erudite, rococo philosophy, and who set in motion the process of the intellectualization of the lower social class was Christian Thomasius: he is the founder of the German Enlightenment".

[2]Cf. Wundt, p. 19: while the first age of the Enlightenment (1690–1720) was characterized by Ch. Thomasius, the second was notable for the school of Wolff and for the debate on Wolffism (1720–1750), and the third for the transformation of philosophy "in die allgemeine Bildung" (1750–1780).

[3]Ch. Thomasius, *Einleitung zu der Vernunfft-Lehre* (Halle, 1691), repr. with "Vorwort" by W. Schneiders (Hildesheim, 1968), p. 156.

[4]See the curriculum of the philosophy courses held by Thomasius at Halle: logic and history of philosophy introduced the "fundamental" disciplines, that is, ethics, politics and economy; cf. Paulsen, *Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts an den deutschen Schulen und Universitäten*, I , pp. 529–530.

acquired a prestige that it had probably not had since the time of Leibniz, and this reputation persuaded Wolff to accept a chair of philosophy in a provincial city like Halle rather than take up a position at the court of Berlin offered to him by Frederick II.[5]

German philosophical historiography did not begin with Thomasius and Buddeus, yet they were at the start of a vast movement of the study of the history of philosophy which was to lead to Jakob Brucker's *Historia critica philosophiae*. Compared with the works of Jonsius, Tribbechow, and Jakob Thomasius, which continued to be appreciated and consulted, the historiographical output of this period stands out because of its more marked philosophical emphasis, from which exponents of the "eclectic" philosophy of Thomasian inspiration demanded a justification and a reinforcement of their own theoretical position. In effect, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, philosophical historiography acquired a greater theoretical consistency, thanks not only to the influence of Bayle's *Dictionnaire* and the battle aged by the Pietists, but also thanks to the renewal of practical philosophy promoted by the school of Christian Thomasius: their research into the field of natural law came in fact to unite with a series of ethical, psychological, and political considerations which also had repercussions on the way in which the history of philosophy itself was interpreted (cf. Mulsow, *Moderne aus dem Untergrund*, pp. 312–313). In this way, the history of philosophy came to assume a function that was markedly polemical, breaking with a philosophical past that historical inquiry itself showed to be obsolete or, at least, in need of correction and improvement.

A deeper understanding of the notion of "eclecticism" was arrived at by defining and excluding other philosophical methods – sectarian, skeptical, and syncretist – that had proved to be inadequate both from the speculative and the historical point of view. The sectarian is not worthy of the name of philosopher: he is like the pupil who repeats the teaching of his master dogmatically, while the attitude of the philosopher is, in the manner of the Enlightenment, precisely that of the adult who, conscious of his own maturity and intellectual autonomy, knows how to make good use of his critical faculty and judgement: "So we agree that this choice should be recommended to teachers and adults rather than to the young and inexperienced" (Ch. Thomasius, *Introductio ad philosophiam aulicam* (Halle, 1702), p. 44). Nor, strictly speaking, can sceptics be defined as philosophers, because not only do they deny the possibility of reaching the truth but they also reject the tools for acquiring knowledge: "Above all, if they destroy the very foundations on which the certainty of our knowledge rests, then they claim that the senses themselves are wrong and that reason is absolutely incapable of distinguishing right from wrong" (J.F. Buddeus, *Compendium historiae philosophiae* (Halle, 1731), pp. 15–16). Neither of these two points of view show much interest in history, and in any case,

[5] Cf. Paulsen, *Die deutschen Universitäten und das Universitätsstudium*, p. 55. The renewal of academic culture had its starting point in the founding of the University of Halle (1694) and affected both the way of teaching – emphasis on the systematic method in the exegesis of the canonical texts, discussion in seminars, the use of German and the adoption of the semestral academic year – and the content – interest in modern philosophy and in the natural sciences and mathematics, affirmation of the independence of human reason and freedom of research.

any such interest is corrupted by these two prejudices which manage to impede the attainment of historical truth in equal measure.

On the contrary, the study of the history of philosophy is very important to syncretism, which is founded on the recognition that truth has already been revealed by the philosophers of the past and is scattered among the various schools. There is an analogy with the eclectic method, but this is only external and hides profound differences over the nature of philosophical research and the historical point of view. Precisely in order to avoid confusion, the *Observationes selectae*, the review published at Halle (1700–1705) under Buddeus' editorship, devoted three articles to the subject of syncretism: "De syncretismo philosophico generatim" (OS, III, pp. 218–230); "De conciliatione philosophorum cum Scriptura Sacra" (OS, III, pp. 230–258); and "De conciliatione philosophorum inter se" (OS, III, pp. 258–280).

The syncretists do not limit themselves to professing toleration between differing opinions ("they claim that one should tolerate all who defend different ideas, whatever opinion they support": OS, III, p. 221) but they look to reconcile their "principia": "But it is clear that this sort of reconciliation of teachings is very different from toleration; while the latter is sometimes praiseworthy, the former, on the other hand, if one makes an effort to reconcile those that are really contradictory, cannot but cause great harm to the truth, as will be shown later" (OS, III, p. 221).

Two forms of syncretism have appeared in history. The first consists of reconciling philosophy and Christianity, the second of reconciling the schools of philosophy. In the past, the Church Fathers interpreted Scripture with Platonic concepts, while Scholasticism was simply "confused chaos deriving from this mixture of Holy Scripture and Aristotle" (OS, III, p. 240). In the modern era this form of concordism was brought out again, not only by admirers of the ancient schools of philosophy (Bessarion, Trapezuntius, Gassendi, and Lipsius) but also by representatives of "Mosaic philosophy", among whom Thomas Burnet "put the greatest effort into reconciling his 'geogonia' with the Mosaic history of Creation" (OS, III, p. 257). Syncreticism of the theories of Plato and Aristotle is the other motive dominating the history of Ancient thought (Neoplatonism) and Renaissance thought (Giovanni Pico della Mirandola). After the appearance of the Cartesian system, syncretism became the means of reconciling this with Aristotelianism (J.C. Sturm).

In a debate with J.-B. Du Hamel, who extolled eclecticism in words but in reality sought an "agreement between old and new philosophy" (cf. above Chapter 1, para 1.2), the eclectic was defined as one who does not distort philosophical systems in a search for points of contact, but recognizes and respects the uniqueness and diversity of the various philosophical teachings: "The person who proceeds according to the method of eclectic philosophy does not collect fragments of the teachings of the Ancients from here and there, but takes in the history of each school carefully and impartially before considering whether it should be accepted or rejected. Philosophical syncretism abhors this philosophical method because it has caused the very thinking of the philosophers to be corrupted. On the contrary, to examine such thought is the most important concern of the eclectic philosopher" (OS, III, pp. 275–276). Judgement of the philosophical value of systems must follow an understanding of their historical significance. The distinction between these two

stages of research makes the study of the history of philosophy profitable, since it guarantees the possibility of an authentic comparison with the philosophers of the past, in which philosophers express points of view that effectively differ from those of the historian. However, the exercise of choice also presupposes a personal and continuous examination of the reality of things: "from an examination of the things themselves one can carefully form principles for oneself" (Buddeus, *Compendium*, p. 537). On the basis of this, the eclectic distinguishes from among the opinions of the various schools "what is to be embraced and what on the contrary is to be rejected".

Eclecticism has found in the history of philosophy the most suitable field for its own exercise: "The very fact of despairing at finding the truth in dogmatic philosophy renders [eclectic] spirits free in the presence of the history of philosophy and gives them a powerful interest in it" (Braun, p. 95). In this way the history of philosophy becomes the expression and the symbol of the new philosophical attitude: "Since the beginning of this century, at the University of Halle in particular, when eclectic philosophy began to raise its head and those great men rose up as guides to encourage new and better projects, and undertook to develop the history of philosophy and to provide it with new observations, some worked to give a historical aspect to the new institutions of philosophy that were being set up. And this praiseworthy example, which we owe especially to Christian Thomasius, who was pointed in this direction by the possession of his father's manuscripts, and to Johann Franz Buddeus, was then followed by many others" (Brucker, VI, p. 29).

This passage from Brucker omits one very important precedent. Leibniz, developing Jakob Thomasius' position, had anticipated the eclectic solution and, rejecting sectarianism and syncretism, but also abandoning his master's Aristotelian prejudice, had set out to find out how much that was good was expressed in all of the systems: "[...] I would have preferred the labours of all the centuries and peoples to be joined into one, that is, that not only should the things eagerly acquired before our time be restored to the public treasury, but also that today we should not neglect the contributions of anyone who is able to offer something, whether through his intelligence, his effort or his condition in life [...]" (G.W. Leibniz, *Guilelmi Placidii initia et specimina scientiae generalis*, in *Die philosophischen Schriften von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*, ed. C.J. Gerhardt, Vol. VII (Berlin, 1890), p. 130). This was not substantially different from the notion of eclecticism put forward by Ch. Thomasius and Buddeus, if we leave aside the more polemical, anti-dogmatic and anti-Aristotelian attitude that this notion was acquiring in the early eighteenth century. But the "eclectic" inspiration of Leibniz's philosophy was not understood by the historians of philosophy of this period, who did not sympathise with his reform of metaphysics, or his over-indulgent attitude towards the Scholastics, and who had become wary of him after Wolff's revival of his philosophy.

In their emphasis on the usefulness of the history of philosophy, the German philosophers of this period were fond of recalling Bacon's project, outlined in his *De dignitate et augmentis scientiarum,* in which "he proposed a certain idea of literary history, which includes the origin, progress and destiny of all the arts and all the disciplines" (J.F. Buddeus, *Isagoge ad theologiam universam* (Leipzig, 1730^2),

Vol. I, p. 184). Interest in history was linked to the formulation of a rigorously empirical philosophical method and to a polemic against the use of the geometric method and the syllogism in philosophy: "The object of history is the opinions of others. Philosophy reasons about one's own opinions and those of others. The opinions of others are, however, extremely useful for the study of wisdom, because on the one hand they compensate for the imperfection and inadequacy of one's own opinions, and on the other hand are very helpful for correcting them" (Ch. Thomasius, *Cautelae circa praecognita jurisprudentia* (Halle, 1710), p. 58). Thus the progress of knowledge is guaranteed by the study of history, which offers the possibility of collaboration with the scholars of the past and enlarges the field of human experience beyond the limits of individual experience.

The urgent questions and theological warnings raised by Pietism, which A.H. Francke was preaching at Halle from 1692, existed side by side with these philosophical topics. Halle, which was at the origin of the *Aufklärung* with Ch. Thomasius and Ch. Wolff, was also the most important centre for the spread of Pietism in the world of German culture.

In its battle against the dogmatism of orthodox theology, Pietism produced a new historiography of the Church; it professed to be "impartial", and it judged both the Roman Church and the Lutheran Church to be persecutors, and both to be equally distant from the true Christ. The works on this subject by Gottfried Arnold (1666–1714) aroused much interest: *Unparteiische Kirchen- und Ketzerhistorie von Anfang des Neuen Testaments biss auf das Jahr Christi 1688*, 2 Vols. (Frankfurt, 1699–1700) and *Historia et descriptio theologiae mysticae seu theosophiae arcanae et reconditae itemque veterum et novorum mysticorum* (Frankfurt, 1702). In both, he defended those persecuted for religious reasons who, endowed with greater sensibility, were defined as heretics by the orthodox of all Churches and condemned "by those without experience in the hidden wisdom, who despise all of its mysteries" (*Historia et descriptio*, p. 125). The only authority recognised by the historian is the Word of Christ, not the ordinances of the ecclesiastical authorities who have appropriated that authority to themselves and have subordinated it to their own interests: "Thus it will happen that we shall recognise ourselves as debtors to the finest examples and we shall abandon the wicked things to their evil destiny, and we shall not insult the innocent or despise those people whom the godless and shameless condemn as heretics or charlatans [. . .] I shall try to explain our intention briefly: it will be useful in all areas and especially in sacred things to distinguish between Christ and the Antichrist and to compare carefully the deeds of each of them" (G. Arnold, *Commentatio de corrupto historiarum studio* (Frankfurt, 1697), pp. 20–21).

Works on the history of philosophy of this period belong to a context deeply marked by religious concerns, to such an extent that the history of philosophy can be considered almost as a chapter of ecclesiastical history, an essential introduction to the study of theology. In addition to the work of Zierold, a Pietist like Arnold, who made this link between the history of philosophy and Church history his theme, from the very title of his work onwards – *Einleitung zur Kirchenhistorie mit der Historia philosophica verknüpfft* – this perspective included Buddeus's *Theses de atheismo et superstitione* and Christoph Wolf's *Manichaeismus ante Manichaeos et*

in Christianismo redivivus. In these books the search for the foundations of atheism and for the origin of the Manichaean heresy led to a systematic treatment of ancient and modern thought, following the Patristic idea that philosophy was simultaneously the cause of ungodliness and the source of heresy.

The religious and theological purpose of "historia philosophica" was specifically expressed by Buddeus in his *Introductio ad historiam philosophiae Ebraeorum*: "The main purpose that I propose, and the fruit of all my labours, will be that mortal men, warned by so many examples, will at last learn not to attribute excessive value to their own intelligence and not to go beyond the limits allowed by the human weakness that hangs over us. In fact, it will become clear from the whole history of philosophy that I am about to embark on, that all the sects and errors and whatever detestable thing the wise man finds confirmed by the philosophers, and the very heresies in the Church, have arisen precisely because mortals have dared to violate these limits set by nature" (*Praefatio*, p. 10). Philosophical historiography faithfully respected this programme; it gave pre-eminence, in the philosophical systems, to the theological or metaphysical teaching in order to reach, in each case, a discussion of the presumed or actual atheism of the philosophers. It examined with particular attention the points of contact between Greek philosophy and Christianity in order to understand the birth of heresy and the origin of the mystical and scholastic systems of philosophy founded respectively on the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle; it took care to verify and to study the Platonism of the Church Fathers, a delicate and topical subject which was being raised at this time by anti-Trinitarian polemicists and decisively refuted by the Catholics.[6] These historians did not take a position against orthodoxy, but operated unequivocally within the Lutheran church, making use of the history of philosophy to defend Reformed theological positions, as a tool of anti-Catholic polemic and in the battle against libertinism.

The favourite target of Pietist historians was Aristotle, whose philosophy was interpreted, following the original Lutheran view, as an expression of the pride of the man who rejects the help of revelation and believes himself to be capable of resolving all problems by means of reason. Aristotelianism is not only erroneous, it is the source of atheism, the origin of heresy (Pelagianism), and a cause of the corruption of the Church (Popery). Zierold was convinced that Aristotle was inspired by the Devil himself, with the aim of deceiving mankind and sowing evil in the world. In this work of refuting Aristotelianism, Pietism was allied with Thomasius' eclecticism, and it resulted in ending the Peripatetic hegemony in Germany in the

[6]The debate, which was initiated by the *Traité de l'employ des Saincts Pèrez pour le jugement des differends qui sont aujourd'hui dans la religion*, published in 1632 by the Huguenot pastor Jean Daillé, developed at the beginning of the eighteenth century between J. Le Clerc, who had taken up Daillé's argument in a review of his essay in the *Bibliothèque universelle*, Vol. X, and the Jesuit Baltus, author of a *Défense des S.S. Pèrez accusez de Platonisme* (Paris, 1711); cf. Chapter 2, Introduction. The German historians, all Lutherans, took, as we shall see, an intermediate position; they did not deny that the Church Fathers might have been followers of Plato whose philosophical terminology they could have adopted, but they declared that the main articles of faith, such as the Incarnation and the Trinity, can be found only in their original formulation in Scripture.

late seventeeth and early eighteenth century. This was lamented by Jo. Hermann von Elswich (1684–1721) in his *De varia Aristotelis in scholis protestantium fortuna schediasma* (Wittenberg, 1720): "Things have come to the point where sooner or later Aristotle will be insulted by people who have not even read the first page of his writings attentively. Judgements worse than any others have been made against Aristotle, but sometimes with great superficiality and no less ignorance". He concludes: "In the state in which we find philosophical matters here today, everyone can see without difficulty that the fortune of Aristotle is very different from what it was in the past" (pp. 108 and 112). Elswich, who professed to be a moderate Aristotelian, could not accept such a radical and unmotivated condemnation of Aristotelian philosophy: "I should, however, declare that the merits of Aristotle in philosophy are so great and numerous that they do not deserve to be attacked so sarcastically nor to be considered so despicable and insignificant. Some people, I do not deny, have venerated Aristotle excessively. But this should not be blamed on the Stagirite any more than on Plato and Descartes, whose admirers have not always praised and venerated them in moderation" (pp. 110–111). Elswich believed that the method of the modern eclectics was less solid and less well-founded: "Some become sectarians, thinking that they are eclectics. Others believe that in order to be eclectic it is enough to make up some sort of system using the various principles of philosophy. But because they are lacking in judgement, they are not able to assess whether these are consistent with the principles that ought to rule the (philosophical) disciplines. For this reason, it is not unusual for such systems to destroy themselves and finish up like Samson's wolves who, being tied together by the tail, twisted their heads this way and that" (p. 111).

Elswich's *Schediasma* was written on the occasion of the republication of two classic works of seventeenth-century historiography, Launoy's *De varia Aristotelis in academia Parisiensi fortuna*, and Jonsius's *De historia peripatetica* (Wittenberg, 1720). As a result of the interest in the history of philosophy fostered by Ch. Thomasius and Buddeus, a large part of the philosophical historiography of the previous century came back into circulation. J.J. von Ryssel completed Vossius's *De philosophia et philosophorum sectis* (Leipzig, 1690); Ch. Thomasius re-introduced the *Schediasma historicum* written by his father Jakob, with the title *Origines philosophicae et ecclesiasticae* (Halle, 1699); Schaffer's *De natura et constitutione philosophiae Italicae* was re-edited "cum praefatione C.S. Schurtzfleischii" (Wittenberg, 1701); and Heumann republished Tribbechow's *De doctoribus scholasticis* (Jena, 1719). These new editions were intended to improve on the originals and to make them suitable for new demands; thus Olearius did not simply translate Stanley's *History of Philosophy* (Leipzig, 1711) but also added to it several dissertations, among them the famous *De philosophia eclectica*; Johann Christoph Dorn completed the section of Jonsius' *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae* (Jena, 1716) that concerned the modern era ("he [Jonsius] had reviewed a few writers, about forty, from among the moderns") and dedicated this work to Buddeus: "No greater honour or patronage could have been had for this book than your authority, O Maecenas!" ("Ad L.B. Editor").

The general histories of philosophy examined in this chapter do not exhaust the range of German philosophical historiography in the early eighteenth century. Apart from the numerous dissertations on Eastern philosophy, on the Greek schools, and on individual authors, which were being written in nearly all of the universities, it is important to mention the histories of morality because of the increasing significance of "practical" philosophy in the context of Thomasian eclecticism.

Nicolaus Hieronymus Gundling 1671–1729, the author of many commentaries and articles on literary, historical and philosophical subjects (*Otia*, 3 Vols. (Halle, 1706–1707); *Gundlingiana* (Magdeburg, 1715)), published in Halle in 1706 a *Historia philosophiae moralis. Pars prima*, devised as an introduction to a *Systema philosophiae moralis*, inspired by Thomasius's principles. It did not go beyond the first part, which examined the moral teachings of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, Indians, Chinese, and Western peoples (Gauls and Germans) in six chapters.

The entire output of Georg Paschius (1661–1707) has close links with philosophical historiography. He was the son-in-law of Kortholt and professor of moral philosophy at Kiel. He wrote a *Tractatus de novis inventis, quorum accuratiori cultui facem praetulit antiquitas* (Kiel, 1695; Leipzig, 1700), in which he demonstrated that all scientific discoveries can be traced back to antiquity. Paschius was also interested in the writings on morality of the Greek philosophers: *De re litteraria pertinente ad doctrinam moralem Socratis* (Kiel, 1706); *Brevis introductio in rem litterariam pertinentem ad doctrinam moralem* (Kiel, 1707); "Introductio in rem litterariam moralem veterum sapientiae antistitum", in *De variis modis moralia tradendi liber* (Kiel, 1707), pp. 517–726. This latter work is a true history of moral philosophy, based to a large extent on a reading of the original texts, and divided into six chapters, corresponding to the most famous schools of philosophy: 1. Socrates and the Academics; 2. Peripatetics; 3. Stoics; 4. Pythagoreans; 5. Epicureans; and 6. Sceptics.

Another history of moral philosophy, this time in German, appeared at Jena in 1714, the work of Gottlieb Stolle (1673–1744): *Historie der heydnischen Morale*. The division into periods was that used in philosophical historiography: Barbarians, Greeks, and Romans. The most appreciated of the ancient teachings on morality was that of Epicurus, because of its close linking of virtue and pleasure. There was also a reappraisal of Epicurus, in the wake of Gassendi and Ch. Thomasius, in *De Epicuro, creationis et providentiae divinae assertore* (Jena, 1713).

Parallel with this study of the history of philosophy intensive work was carried out on bibliography; this continued the tradition of polyhistory, to which Morhof gave a definitive literary emphasis towards the end of the seventeenth century. Reimmann (cf. para 6 of this chapter), Fabricius, Struve, and Stolle were noteworthy in this field.

Johann Albrecht Fabricius (1668–1736), professor and later rector at the University of Hamburg, edited an edition of Morhof's *Polyhistor* (1732), adding a preface with a list of European journals (*Notitia Ephemeridum*, 30 pp.). His reputation is linked to the famous "libraries": *Bibliotheca Latina, sive notitia auctorum*

veterum Latinorum quorumcunque scripta ad nos pervenerunt (Hamburg, 1697; London, 1703; Hamburg, 1708 and 1712–1722, 3 Vols.; Venice, 1728; Leipzig 1733); *Bibliotheca Latina mediae et infimae aetatis* (Hamburg, 1734–1746, 6 Vols.; "editio nova studio J. Dominici Mansi et Mss. editisque codicibus correcta, illustrata et aucta", Padua, 1754). Even more appreciated, such as to earn from Heumann the title of "Museum Graeciae", was the *Bibliotheca Graeca, sive notitia scriptorum veterum Graecorum quorumque monumenta integra aut fragmenta edita extant, tum plerorumque e manuscriptis ac deperditis,* 14 Vols. (Hamburg, 1705–1728, reprinted a century later under the editorship of M.G.C. Harles (Hamburg, 1790–1812)). In the eighteenth century these works were considered as indispensable bibliographical tools for the history of ancient philosophy: "No one will be able to ignore these works if he wishes to make good progress in examining the evidence for the ancient history of the human mind" (Brucker, I, p. 32).

Burkhart Gotthelf Struve (1671–1738), a pupil of Cellarius and professor of history at the University of Jena, published the *Bibliotheca philosophica in suas classes distributa* (Jena, 1704; revised by L.I. Kahle and divided into two volumes, Göttingen, 1740), the first on the "Scriptores philosophiae contemplativae", the second on the "Scriptores philosophiae practicae". The first also contains a history of philosophical historiography (Chapter III: "De scriptoribus qui historiam philosophicam, methodum tractandi, paedias, systemata et controversias philosophicas scripserunt", pp. 148–259) in which the author examined firstly general histories and then works of reference for individual authors or schools.

Gottlieb Stolle, mentioned above for his contribution to the history of morality, wrote a work of polyhistory structured according to the needs of academic study: *Einleitung zur Historie der philosophischen Gelahrtheit*, first published at Jena in 1718 and enlarged in the later editions of 1724, 1727, 1734, 1736, which was translated into Latin: *Introductio in historiam litterariam in gratiam cultorum elegantiarum litterarum et philosophiae conscripta* (Jena, 1728). Here the literary history is divided into three parts, corresponding to the three branches of the faculty of philosophy: (1) Liberal arts (grammar, hermeneutics, rhetoric, poetry, history, and mathematics); (2) Theoretical philosophy (logic, metaphysics, pneumatology, and natural philosophy); (3) Practical philosophy (natural law, ethics, politics, and economics). The first chapter, on theoretical philosophy ("De philosophia generatim considerata", pp. 417–524) not only contains information on the life and works of the philosophers but also, following the framework of Jonsius and Struve, describes works on the history of philosophy, with notes and opinions on the authors and their works. From this point of view, it constitutes a bibliographical tool, essential for an understanding of historiography, above all the most recent German publications.

Bibliographical Note

On the culture of the *Frühaufklärung*: Hazard; E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Enlightenment* (Princeton N.J., 1951); W. Philipp, *Das Werden der Aufklärung in theologie-geschichtlicher Sicht* (Göttingen, 1957); F. Valjavec, *Geschichte der*

abendländischen Aufklärung (Vienna and Munich, 1961); Wundt, pp. 19–121; H.M. Wolff, *Die Weltanschauung der deutschen Aufklärung in geschichtlicher Entwicklung*, 2nd edn. (Bern and Munich, 1963); W. Krauss, *Studien zur deutschen und französischen Aufklärung* (Berlin, 1963); N. Merker, *L'illuminismo tedesco. Età di Lessing* (Bari, 1968); W. Schneiders, *Die wahre Auflkärung. Zum Selbstverständnis der deutschen Aufklärung* (Munich, 1974); R. Ciafardone, *L'illuminismo tedesco. Metodo filosofico e premesse etico-teologiche (1690–1765)* (Rieti, 1978); P.K. Kapitza, *Ein bürgerlicher Krieg in der gelehrten Welt. Zur Geschichte der Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes in Deutschland* (Munich, 1981); G.E. Grimm, *Literatur und Gelehrtentum in Deutschland. Untersuchungen zum Wandel ihres Verhältnisse vom Humanismus bis zur Frühaufklärung* (Tübingen, 1983); D. Bell, *Spinoza in Germany from 1670 to Age of Goethe* (London, 1984); H. Möller, *Vernunft und Kritik: deutsche Aufklärung im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt a.M., 1986); W. Schröder, *Spinoza in der deutschen Frühaufklärung* (Würzburg, 1987); Id., *Ursprünge des Atheismus. Untersuchungen zur Metaphysik- und Religionskritik des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt, 1998); *Frühaufklärung in Deutschland und Polen*, eds. K. Bal, S. Wollgast, P. Schellenberger (Berlin, 1991); D. von Wille, *Lessico filosofico della* Frühaufklärung*: Christian Thomasius, Christian Wolff, Johann Georg Walch* (Rome, 1991); M. Pott, *Aufklärung und Aberglaube. Die deutsche Frühaufklärung im Spiegel der Aberglaubenskritik* (Tübingen, 1992); *Frühaufklärung*, ed. S. Neumeister (Munich, 1994); A. Gardt, *Sprachreflexion in Barock und Frühaufklärung. Entwürfe von Böhme bis Leibniz* (Berlin, 1994); U.J. Schneider, *Die Vergangenheit des Geistes. Eine Archäologie der Philosophie-geschichte* (Frankfurt a.M., 1990); B. Bianco, *Fede e sapere: la parabola dell'*Aufklärung *tra pietismo e idealismo* (Naples, 1992); S. Wollgast, *Vergessene und Verkannte. Zur Philosophie und Geistesentwicklung in Deutschland zwischen Reformation und Frühaufklärung* (Berlin, 1993); *Samuel Pufendorf und die europäische Frühaufklärung*, eds. F. Palladini and G. Hartung (Berlin, 1996); *Ambivalenzen der Aufklärung*, eds. G. Ammarer and H. Haas (Wien, 1997); *Johann Lorenz Mosheim, 1693–1755. Theologie im Spannungsfeld von Philosophie, Philologie und Geschichte*, ed. M. Mulsow et al. (Wiesbaden, 1997); *Zwischen Narretei und Weisheit. Biographische Skizzen und Konturen alter Gelehrsamkeit*, eds. G. Hartung and W.P. Klein (Hildesheim – Zürich – New York, 1997); E. Canone, "I lessici filosofici latini del Seicento", in *Il vocabolario della* République des Lettres*. Terminologia filosofica e storia della filosofia. Problemi di metodo*, ed. M. Fattori (Florence, 1997), pp. 93–114; T.J. Hochstrasser, *Natural Law Theories in the Early Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 2000); *Theorie der Interpretation vom Humanismus bis zur Romantik. Rechtswissenschaft, Philosophie, Theologie*, ed. J. Schröder (Stuttgart, 2001); M. Mulsow, *Moderne aus dem Untergrund. Radikale Frühaufklärunf in Deutschland, 1680–1720* (Hamburg, 2002); P. Ruth, *Hermeneutica universalis. Die Entfaltung der historisch-kritischen Vernunft in frühen 18. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt a.M., 2002); *Early Modern Natural Law Theories. Contexts and Strategies in Early Enlightenment*, eds. T.J. Hochstrasser and P. Schröder (Dordrecht and Boston, 2003); *Leibnizbilder*

im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert, ed. A. Lewendoski (Stuttgart, 2004); A.U. Sommer, *Sinnstiftung durch Geschichte? Zur Entstehung spekulativ-universalistischer Geschichtsphilosophie zwischen Bayle und Kant* (Basle, 2006); M. Mulsow, *Freigeister im Gottsched-Kreis: Wolffianismus, studentische Aktivitäten und Religionskritik in Leipzig, 1740–1745* (Göttingen, 2007).

On the links between philosophy and Pietism: A. Ritschl, *Geschichte des Pietismus*, 3 Vols. (Bonn, 1880–1886; facs. repr. Berlin, 1966); F.A.G. Tholuck, *Geschichte des Rationalismus*, I Abt.: *Geschichte des Pietismus und des ersten Stadiums der Aufklärung* (Berlin, 1865; facs. repr. Aalen, 1970); J.M. Carré, "Le piétisme de Halle et la philosophie des Lumières (1690–1750)", *Revue de synthèse historique*, XXVII/3, n. 81 (1913), pp. 279–308; P. Petersen, *Geschichte der aristotelischen Philosophie im protestantischen Deutschland* (Leipzig, 1921; facs. repr. Stuttgart – Bad Cannstatt, 1964), pp. 339–519 ("Der Kampf gegen Aristoteles und die allmähliche Herausbildung einer philologisch-historischen Betrachtungsweise"); C. Hinrichs, *Preussentum und Pietismus. Der Pietismus in Brandeburg-Preussen als religiös-soziale Reformbewegung* (Göttingen, 1971); *Orthodoxie und Pietismus*, ed. M. Greschat (Stuttgart, 1982); R. Osculati, *Vero cristianesimo. Teologia e società moderna nel pietismo luterano* (Rome-Bari, 1990); *Geschichte des Pietismus*, eds. M. Brecht, K. Doppermann, U. Gäbler and H. Lehmann, 4 Vols. (Göttingen, 1993–2004); J. Wallmann, *Theologie und Frömmigkeit im Zeitalter des Barock* (Tübingen, 1995); M. Gierl, *Pietismus und Aufklärung. Theologische Polemik und die Kommunikationsreform der Wissenschaft am Ende des 17. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 1997); H. Marti, "Der Seelenfrieden der Stillen im Lande. Quietistische Mystik und radikaler Pietismus. Das Beispiel Gottfried Arnolds", in *Jansenismus, Quietismus, Pietismus*, ed. H. Lehmann (Göttingen, 2002), pp. 92–103; J. Wallmann, *Der Pietismus* (Göttingen, 2005).

On philosophical eclecticism: P. Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica di Antonio Genovesi* (Naples, 1972), pp. 321–417 ("Un eclettismo programmatico": on Ch. Thomasius, Buddeus and Wolff); H. Holzey, "Philosophie als Eklektik", *Studia Leibnitiana*, XV (1983), 1, pp. 19–29; W. Schneiders, "Vernünftiger Zweifel und wahre Eklektik. Zur Entstehung des modernen Kritikbegriffes", *Studia Leibnitiana*, XVII (1985), 2, pp. 143–161; W. Schmidt-Biggemann, *Theodizee und Tatsachen. Das philosophische Profil der deutschen Aufklärung* (Frankfurt a.M., 1988), pp. 7–57; H. Dreitzel, "Zur Entwicklung und Eigenart der 'eklektischen' Philosophie", *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung*, XVIII (1991), pp. 281–343; U.J. Schneider, "Über den philosophischen Eklektizismus", in *Nach der Postmoderne*, ed. A. Steffens (Düsseldorf – Bernsheim, 1992), pp. 201–224; Id., "Das Eklektizismus-Problem der Philosophiegeschichte", in *Jacob Brucker (1696–1770)*, eds. W. Schmidt-Biggemann and Th. Stammen, pp. 135–158; Id., "Eclecticism and the History of Philosophy", in *History and the Disciplines. The Reclassification of Knowledge in Early Modern Europe*, ed. D.R. Kelley (Rochester, N.Y., 1997), pp. 83–101; M. Albrecht, *Eklektik. Eine Begriffsgeschichte mit Hinweisen auf die Philosophie- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte* (Stuttgart, 1994); D.R. Kelley, *The Descent of Ideas: the History of Intellectual History* (Aldershot,

2002); L. Catana, *The Historiographical Context "System of Philosophy". Its Origin, Nature, Influence and Legitimacy* (Leiden and Boston, 2008), pp. 22–31.

On the renewal of university studies: W. Schrader, *Geschichte der Friedrichs-Universität zu Halle,* 2 Vols. (Berlin, 1894); F. Paulsen, *Die deutschen Universitäten und das Universitätsstudium* (Berlin, 1902); Id., *Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts an den deutschen Schulen und Universitäten vom Ausgang des Mittelalters bis zur Gegenwart*, 2 Vols. (Leipzig, 1919–1921; facs. repr. Berlin, 1960), Vol. I, pp. 524–564 ("Die Universitäten unter den Einfluss der höfisch-modernen Bildung und des Pietismus. Die neue Universität Halle. Thomasius, Francke, Wolff"); J. Dick, "Zum Funktionswandel der Universitäten vom 17. zum 18. Jahrhundert. Am Beispiel Halle", in *Stadt – Schule – Universität. Buchwesen und die deutsche Literatur im 17. Jahrhundert*, ed. A. Schöne (Tübingen, 1976); R. Vierhaus, "Die Universität Göttingen und die Anfänge der modernen Geschichtswissenschaft im 18. Jahrhundert", in *Geschichtswissenschaft in Göttingen. Eine Vorlesungsreihe*, eds. H. Boockmann and H. Wellenreuther (Göttingen, 1987), pp. 9–29; H. Zedelmaier, "Zur Geschichte der Georg-August-Universität Göttingen. Wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Erträge des Göttinger Universitätsjubiläums", *Das Achtzehnte Jahrhundert*, XIII (1989), 1, pp. 9–17; *Universitäten und Aufklärung*, ed. N. Hammerstein (Göttingen, 1995); *Vernünftige Ärzte. Hallesche Psychomediziner und die Anfänge der Anthropologie in der deutschsprächigen Frühaufklärung*, ed. C. Zelle (Tübingen, 2001); *Philosophisches Denken in Halle. Personen und Texte*, eds. G. Schenk and R. Meyer, Abt. 1., *Philosophen des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Bd. 1., *Psychologisch-juristische Richtung der Logik im 18. Jahrhundert in Halle: Thomasius, Buddeus, Sperlette, Schneider, Gundling, Heineccius* (Halle, 2008).

On the journals of the period: J. Kirchner, *Das deutsche Zeitschriftenwesen. Seine Geschichte und seine Probleme*, Teil I: *Von den Anfängen bis zum Zeitalter der Romantik*, Vol. 1 (Wiesbaden, 1958); J. Wilke, *Literarische Zeitschriften des 18. Jahrhunderts (1688–1789)*, 2 Vols. (Stuttgart, 1978); D. Kuhles, *Deutsche literarische Zeitschriften von der Aufklärung bis zur Romantik. Bibliographie der kritischen Literatur von den Anfängen bis 1990* (Munich, 1994).

For connections with the historiography of the period: W. Dilthey, "Das achtzehnte Jahrhundert und die geschichtliche Welt" [1901], in Id., *Gesammelte Schriften* (Leipzig und Berlin, 1927), Vol. III, pp. 209–275; E. Fueter, *Geschichte der neueren Historiographie* (Munich and Berlin, 1936; facs. repr. New York, 1968), pp. 307–349; Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Enlightenment*, pp. 197–233 ("The Conquest of the historical world"); F. Meinecke, *Die Entstehung des Historismus*, 1. Buch: *Vorstufen und Aufklärungshistorie* (Munich and Berlin, 1936), pp. 1–304 (3rd edn., Munich, 1965); G. Lefebvre, *La naissance de l'historiographie moderne* (Paris, 1971); N. Hammerstein, *Jus und Historie. Zur Geschichte des historischen Denkens an deutschen Universitäten im späten 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 1972); S. Bertelli, *Ribelli, libertini e ortodossi nella storiografia barocca* (Florence, 1973), pp. 341–360 ("Per una 'unparteiische Ketzerhistorie' "); P.H. Reill, *The German Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism* (Berkeley – Los Angeles – London, 1975); *Historische Forschung*

im 18. Jahrhundert. Organisation, Zielsetzung und Ergebnisse, eds. K. Hammer and J. Voss (Bonn, 1976); K. Wetzel, *Theologische Kirchengeschichtsschreibung im deutschen Protestantismus, 1660–1760* (Giessen and Basle, 1983); *Von der Aufklärung zum Historismus. Zum Strukturwandel historischen Denkens*, eds. H.W. Blanke and J. Ruesen (Padeborn, 1984); *Aufklärung und Geschichte: Studien zur deutschen Geschichtswissenschaft im 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. H.E. Bodecker et al. (Göttingen, 1986); A. Seifert, "Von der heiligen zur philosophischen Geschichte. Die Rationalisierung der universalhistorischen Erkenntnis im Zeitalter der Aufklärung", *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, LXVIII (1986), pp. 81–117; M. Völkel, "*Pyrrhonismus historicus" und "fides historica". Die Entwicklung der historischen Methodologie unter dem Gesichtspunkt der historischen Skepsis* (Frankfurt a.M., 1987); Id., "Aufstieg und Fall der protestantischen Universalgeschichte", *Storia della storiografia*, XXXIX (2001), pp. 67–73; *Pratiques et concepts de l'histoire en Europe, XVIe-XVIIIe siècles*, eds. Ch. Grell and J.-M. Dufays (Paris, 1990); U. Muhlack, *Geschichtswissenschaft im Humanismus und in der Aufklärung. Die Vorgeschichte des Historismus* (Munich, 1991); *Universalgeschichte und Nationalgeschichte*, ed. G. Hübinger et al. (Freiburg i.Br., 1994); *Unzeitgemässe Hermeneutik: Verstehen und Interpretation im Denken der Aufklärung*, ed. A. Bühler (Frankfurt am Main, 1994); H. Zedelmaier, "*Historia literaria*. Über den epistemologischen Ort des gelehrten Wissens in der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts", *Das Achtzehnte Jahrhundert*, XXII (1998), pp. 11–21; A.U. Sommer, "Geschichte und Praxis bei Gottfried Arnold", *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*, LIV (2002), pp. 210–243.

Studies on the philosophical historiography of this period: Freyer, pp. 14–21; E. Garin, "La storia 'critica' della filosofia nel Settecento", in Id., *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo*, pp. 241–284; Rak, pp. 63–128; Braun, pp. 89–100; Del Torre, pp. 42–68; E.N. Tigerstedt, *The Decline and Fall of the Neoplatonic Interpretation of Plato* (Helsinki, 1974); G. Santinello, "Note sulla storiografia filosofica in età moderna", in M. Dal Pra – E. Garin – L. Geldsetzer – L. Braun, G. Santinello, *La storiografia filosofica e la sua storia* (Padua, 1982), pp. 103–127; H. Schröpfer, "Die Anfänge der Philosophiegeschichtsschreibung in der deutschen und französischen Aufklärung", in *Aufklärung – Gesellschaft – Kritik. Studien zur Philosophie der Aufklärung*, I (Berlin, 1985); M. Longo, *Historia philosophiae philosophica, Teorie e metodi della storia della filosofia tra Seicento e Settecento* (Milan, 1986); M. Buhr, "System, Konstruktion und Geschichte in der Philosophieentwicklung von Leibniz bis Hegel", in *Leibniz. Tradition und Aktualität*, V. Intern. Leibniz-Kongress, *Vorträge*, II. Teil (Hannover, 1989), pp. 104–120; Gueroult, pp. 329–347; Bonacina, *Filosofia ellenistica e cultura moderna*, pp. 43–68; C.W.T. Blackwell, "Epicurus and Boyle, Le Clerc and Locke. 'Ideas' and their Redifinition in Jacob Brucker's *Historia philosophica de ideis*, 1723", in *Il vocabolario della* République des Lettres, ed. M. Fattori, pp. 77–92; Ead., "*Thales philosophus*. The Beginning of Philosophy as a Discipline", in *History and the Disciplines*, ed. D.R. Kelley, pp. 61–82; W. Schmidt-Biggemann, "Die Historisierung der *Philosophia Hebraeorum* im frühen 18. Jahrhundert. Eine philosophisch-philologische Demontage", in *Historicization-Historiesierung*,

ed. G.W. Most (*Aporemata. Kritische Studien zur Philosophiegeschichte*, Bd. 5) (Göttingen, 2001), pp. 103–128; H. Zedelmaier, *Der Anfang der Geschichte. Studien zur Ursprungsdebatte im 18. Jahrhundert* (Hamburg 2003), pp. 59–131 ("Das Anfangsproblem in der Philosophiegeschichte"); D. Garrett, "Philosophy and History in the History of Modern Philosophy", in *The Future for Philosophy*, ed. B. Leiter (Oxford, 2004), pp. 44–73; J.I. Israel, "Philosophy, History of Philosophy, and *l'Histoire de l'esprit humain*. A Historiographycal Question and Problem for Philosophers", in *Teaching New Histories of Philosophy*, ed. J.B. Schneewind (Princeton, 2004), pp. 329–344; S. Lehmann-Brauns, *Weisheit in der Weltgeschichte. Philosophiegeschichte zwischen Barock und Aufklärung* (Tübingen, 2004); G. Varani, *Pensiero "alato" e modernità. Il neoplatonismo nella storiografia filosofica in Germania (1559–1807)* (Padua, 2008).

5.1 Christian Thomasius (1655–1728)

Introductio ad philosophiam aulicam

Mario Longo

5.1.1. Christian Thomasius, son of Jakob, the historian of philosophy and teacher of Leibniz (cf. *Models*, I, pp. 409–442), was born in Leipzig in 1655. After obtaining a doctorate in philosophy from Leipzig, he moved to Frankfurt where he took a degree in jurisprudence. Following a brief stay in Holland, he returned to Leipzig in 1682 and began almost immediately to give lectures on law. His anti-conformist personality very soon came to light, shown by his interest in Grotius and natural law, and his polemic against the pedantry of academic culture. Having taken up a position against the Aristotelian professors and orthodox theologians, in 1690 he accepted an invitation from the Elector of Brandenburg, Frederick III, to transfer to Halle, where he taught law and moral philosophy until the year of his death, 1728. The new Prussian university of Halle was formed round his professorial chair. It was destined to become, with his considerable contribution, one of the most important centres for the spread of Enlightenment ideas. For a certain period (1698–1708), he was linked to Pietism through his friendship with the theologian Francke. He shared its anti-dogmatic polemic and its new view of a more genuine and personal religion, but he did not approve of the fanaticism of the Pietists and their intolerance towards their opponents, and he did not take part in their battle against Wolff.

The figure of Thomasius has a very important place in the development of the German Enlightenment, not only because of the content of his philosophy, which offered, in contrast to the old and new Aristotelian and Cartesian metaphysics, a rigorous empiricism that was to find numerous followers, from Buddeus to Rüdiger, and made a fruitful relationship with English philosophy possible, but also because of his work as a Pietist against all forms of intolerance and obscurantism, as is shown by his battle against one of the most entrenched popular prejudices, the belief in magic and witch hunting.

5.1.2. We shall only mention here Thomasius's principal writings on legal subjects. While at Leipzig he had already written the *Institutionum jurisprudentiae divinae libri tres, in quibus fundamenta juris naturalis secundum hypotheses ill. Pufendorfii perspicue demonstrantur* (Halle, 1688, 1720[2]), in which he aimed to make a clearer distinction between the law of the state and natural law, finding the foundation of the latter in man himself ("the condition of the whole human race is the norm of natural law", p. 78). His most important and original work in this field came out in Halle in 1705: *Fundamenta juris naturae et gentium ex sensu communi deducta*; in it he founded law on the principle of the "just man" and separated it from politics and morality. The two works were abridged: J.L. Fleischerus, *Institutiones juris naturae et gentium, in quibus regulae justi, decoris atque honesti potissimum secundum principia Thomasiana explanantur et adplicantur* (Halle, 1722).

The *Cautelae circa praecognita jurisprudentiae* (Halle, 1710) is of some interest; in this work, among other things, the author discusses the connections between the study of law and the study of philosophy (cf. the two chapters: "Cautelae de historia et philosophia in genere" and "Cautelae circa studium historiae philosophicae"). The subject had been developed in an earlier work: *Summarischen Entwurf derer Grundlehren, die einegen studioso Juris zu wissen und auf Universitäten zu lernen nöthig* (Halle, 1699), and subsequently in *Cautelae circa praecognita jurisprudentiae ecclesiasticae* (Halle, 1712). Thomasius also wrote a history of natural law: *Paulo plenior historia Juris naturalis in usum auditorii Thomasiani* (Lepizig, 1719), which integrates, and on some points corrects, the similar work by Buddeus. As well as producing these wide-ranging works he carried out the work of a jurist concerned with more concrete problems such as magic and witchcraft: *Disputatio de crimine magiae* (Halle, 1701); *Disputatio de origine processus inquisitorii contra sagas* (Halle, 1711).

Thomasius's philosophical writings were on subjects concerning logic and morality: *Introductio ad philosophiam aulicam seu primae lineae libri de prudentia cogitandi atque ratiocinandi* (Leipzig, 1688; another edition, Halle: Prostat in Officina Rengeriana, 1702; German translation, *Einleitung zur Hoff-Philosophie*, Halle, 1710). It is significant that Thomasius began this work, in which he set out to offer a programme of philosophical study as an alternative to traditional academic courses, with a chapter on the history of philosophy: "De philosophorum sectis" (cf. *infra*, para 5.1.4). His next works, published in Halle, were also devoted to logic and morality: *Einleitung zu der Vernunfft-Lehre* (1691), and *Ausübung der Vernunfft-Lehre* (1692), both republished in 1719 (in these he did not restrict himself to a criticism of Aristotelian and Cartesian logic, but spoke in particular against the "learned" philosophy of Tschirnhaus and in favour of a philosophy valid for all men); *Einleitung zur Sittenlehre* (1692), and *Ausübung der Sittenlehre* (1696), the latter written under the influence of Pietism, which is even more evident in *Versuch von dem Wesen des Geistes* (1699), in which he allowed for the existence of a universal spirit consisting of light and air. His detachment from Pietism appears to have been complete by the time *Dissertatio nova ad Petri Poireti libros de Eruditione triplici, solida, superficiaria et falsa* (Halle, 1708) appeared; in it he condemned mystical theology, which he had approved of in his introduction to the 1694 edition of the same work by Poiret.

Finally, there is Thomasius's work as a publicist, which he had already embarked on at Leipzig, with the journal *Freimüthige, lustige und ernsthaffte Monats-Gespräche über allerhand, fürnehmlich aber neue Bücher* (Frankfurt-Leipzig-Halle, 1688–1690); *Historia sapientiae et stultitiae*, also in a German edition, *Historie der Weisheit und Torheit* (Halle, 1693); *Summarischen Nachrichten von auserlesenen mehrenteils alten in der Thomasischen Bibliotheque vorhandenen* (Halle-Leipzig, 1715–1718). Among his articles on the history of philosophy are: a life of Abelard (HSS, I, pp. 75–112), the history of the Manichaeanism of the Albigenses (HSS, I, pp. 44–56), some notes on the philosophy of Hippocrates and Democritus taken from their letters believed to be authentic (HSS, II, pp. 1–112), and Leibniz's letter on the philosophy of Descartes (HSS, II, pp. 113–123).

5.1.3. Ch. Thomasius's interest in philosophical historiography, which he may first led to study by his father's researches, fits into his idea of philosophy as a means of overcoming traditional academic culture, which was to a great extent still Aristotelian. The summary of the history of philosophy included in his *Introductio ad philosophiam aulicam* has a clearly polemical function, since it demonstrates the limits of a philosophy of schools and shows the need for the eclectic method which alone makes it possible to overcome traditional approaches and to discover a *via media* "between the excessive heights of Cartesianism and the nonsense of the Peripatetics" (*Introd. ad phil. aulicam*, Halle, 1702, *Praefatio,* p. 2).

In his battle against the dogmatism of official culture, Thomasius singled out the critical role that the history of philosophy, and in general the study of history, can play; it shows "the origin and progress of errors, vices and false wisdom", and it is also useful for the individual "who is rendered cautious by the dangers encountered by others" (*Cautelae circa praecognita jurisprudentiae*, Halle, 1710, p. 58). He was concerned, therefore, to describe the nature of historical knowledge, "the eye of wisdom", just like philosophy but independent of it: "Naturally, history is about individual facts that are not present or have passed away, while philosophy refers to the universal, on the basis of which we shall judge the truth and the goodness of other things" (*Cautelae*, p. 57). Both start from feelings, but history is a knowledge of the feelings of others, and therefore cannot be reduced to the form of demonstrative or scientific knowledge, which belongs to philosophy. Thus historical knowledge is not certainty but probability, which implies an act of "faith", the *fides historica* (*Cautelae*, p. 61). For this reason Thomasius recommended critical caution, an attitude of doubt, in the study of historical disciplines: "Even if, when studying philosophy, one is really further from sceptical doubt than from the infallibility of the dogmatics, yet where historical matters are concerned, especially in political questions, one should not believe even the half of what is said. But one does not doubt without a good reason for doubting" (*Cautelae*, p. 68).

The history of philosophy is a useful subject of study. It has a two-fold aim: firstly, it enables us to understand the origin of the modern schools of philosophy, and secondly it warns us against become sectarian or dogmatic (*Cautelae*, p. 74). It is of interest primarily to philosophers, but the range of its applications also includes law and theology, and it is an elegant topic for worldly conversations in the drawing

rooms of princes: “But in particular, it is an ornament and aid to noblemen so that they are not forced to remain in silence in conversation with outstanding men and wait anxiously for an opportunity to draw some remarks from their knowledge of Roman law” (*Cautelae*, pp. 64–65).

A precise definition of the history of philosophy comes from its connections with ecclesiastical history: “The history of philosophy is the history of the origin and progress of human wisdom and foolishness, leaving aside divine revelation. It follows from this that the history of philosophy is in a certain sense fuller than Church history, since it shows in addition the errors in natural philosophy and in civil prudence, and in another sense it is a necessary part of Church history, since it teaches the origin of false dogmas which have, under the pretext of religion, imposed themselves on society and on the state, creating disorder and injustice” (*Cautelae circa praecognita jurispr. Ecclesiasticae*, Halle, 1712, p. 8). Thus the history of philosophy is understood as the “history of the origin and progress of human wisdom and foolishness”, an expression that has a Pietistic ring but which Thomasius interpreted with a different meaning. Apart from his strong assertion of the independence of philosophical research, he attributed both terms, wisdom and foolishness, to human responsibility. The dialectic between these two terms constitutes, in fact, the deep meaning of all history of philosophy: wisdom originated with Adam, spread within the Hebrew tradition and survives within the area of eclectic philosophy; foolishness originated with Cain and has continued throughout history in the form of sectarian philosophy, strenuously defended in the universities.

The history of philosophy, with eclecticism as its model, becomes the most suitable means for promoting a radical renewal of philosophical culture, based on a re-discovered sense of solidarity and collaboration between philosophers: “And so, you might ask: would it not be better to have one single and unchangeable philosophy, rather than a disgusting and changeable philosophy, made of pieces badly patched together, always altering over the course of time? The fault in this lies in the weakness of our intellect and in the difficulty of the subject, not in the philosophical method. There is no philosophy in existence, unique and always faithful to itself, that deserves the name of true philosophy, and so we have to be content with another [i.e. with eclectic philosophy]. It is preferably to have a boat that is fit to sail, even if its parts have often been renewed, rather than always to keep the same ship, all in pieces and full of leaks. In the same way, it is better to have a building decorated by many craftsmen than a hovel, even if built by only one peasant” (*Intr. ad phil. aulicam*, p. 45).

Through the work of Thomasius and his idea of eclecticism, the history of philosophy came to join the Enlightenment, making it possible to deconsecrate every form of Scholasticism, whether Aristotelian or Cartesian, and leading to the concept of philosophy as a structure of wisdom useful to humanity.

5.1.4. *Introductio ad philosophiam aulicam*

5.1.4.1. A brief outline of the history of philosophy is contained in the *Introductio ad philosophiam aulicam* (Halle, 1702), Chapter 1: “De philosophorum sectis”,

pp. 1–45. The work, the purpose of which was a reform of logic, is divided into 16 chapters, in a total of 236 pages. After defining the essence of the human mind and establishing that "the first criterion of truth is sensation" (p. 129), Thomasius develops a non-syllogistic doctrine of judgement. The first chapter, on the history of philosophy, serves as an introduction and is divided into 98 short paragraphs whose titles are listed at the beginning of the summary. There are no indices and the work has no notes, as the author's aim was to write a book that would be widely popular. It is preceded by a dedication to F.A. von Haugwitz, first minister of the Elector of Saxony, and by a "Praefatio ad Lectorem".

5.1.4.2. The historiographical outline that Thomasius offers us has as its subject the sequence of schools, of which only the most important are mentioned: "The schools of the philosophers were infinite; we shall mention only the main ones" (p. 6). The history of philosophy comprises two great periods, before and after the birth of Christ, within which there are other divisions. There are the ante-diluvian (Seth, Cain) and post-diluvian (Hebrews, Nimrodians) sects, which are contrasted with the pagan sects, divided in turn into the Barbarians and the Greeks. The most ancient Greek philosophy was that of the poets (Museus, Orpheus, Homer); then another sort of "not fabulous" search developed, following the two directions of the Ionics and the Italics. After Christ, philosophy unfolded within the Christian world (Church Fathers and Scholastics) and "extra ecclesiam" (Hebrews and Arabs). In the modern era the Aristotelian tradition continued among both Catholics and Protestants. The Aristotelians were opposed in various ways, restoring the ancient schools or initiating new systems. The eclectic method of doing philosophy was opposed to all of them.

Despite the brevity of the scheme proposed, the division into periods is very accurate and precise. A more general chronological division is followed by an intermediate periodization of a diachronic kind: Barbarians and Greeks, Ionics and Italics, Christians and non-Christians; and restorers of rational (Ramus), natural (Descartes), and moral (Grotius) philosophy. In this way, the history of philosophy is split into small periods or sectors, within which the chronological sequence is again followed. However, what chiefly interested Thomasius was not a description of the great historical periods but the origin of the schools. The sequence is based on the link between master and pupil, with schools of disciples following the founders of philosophical schools, and does not take into account any possible analogy between their teachings.

5.1.4.3. According to Thomasius, the history of philosophy contains a radical contradiction between eclectic philosophy, which directly engages man in the search for truth, and school philosophy closed in on itself, jealously possessive of its own principles, intolerant towards other schools. This contradiction had already been revealed in very early times, in the division of the descendants of Adam, between the sons of Seth and Cain and, after the flood, between the Hebrews and Nimrodians (pp. 6–7).

The philosophy of the pagans was essentially a school philosophy, both that of the Barbarians and that of the Greeks. Thomasius is not particularly interested in

presenting their teachings: he is mostly absorbed by the need to explain the derivation of one school from another and to give the fullest possible list of the representatives of each school. Hence he does not even hint at the contents of the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, merely giving a certain amount of space to the Academics and the Sceptics. Between one group and the other there is one difference only: the former affirmed that "they understood that nothing can be understood; the Pyrrhonians, on the other hand, said that they did not understand even what they professed" (p. 17). Thomasius's interest in the Sceptics, despite their error of having removed the certainty of the senses, can perhaps be attributed to their having assumed an antidogmatic position that every philosopher could share; in fact, they did not constitute a school but were "the natural enemies of every philosophy that started from a precise definition" (p. 17).

Thomasius seems to have preferred Roman philosophy of the Republican period, dominated by eclecticism, to Greek philosophy: "Right from the beginning the Romans applied to the art of government what the Greeks had handed down to them, leaving aside the vain disputes that gave rise to the schools of philosophy" (p. 20). The most important Roman philosopher was Cicero: "no one can deny that he was a philosopher unless he denies that he himself is a man. He was above all a Platonist and an Academic, but he also appreciated Aristotle and imitated the Stoics in the first book of *De Lege* and in the *De Officiis*. In brief, he was a true eclectic, as would appear evident if his *Hortensius* still existed" (pp. 21–22). During the Roman Empire, Greek schools again became dominant, both in the pagan world and within the Christian church, where the tendency towards the contamination of religion by Greek philosophy appeared: "The philosophy of the pagans is the mother of the main heresies and the *Philosophers* are in every sense called the *Patriarchs of the Heretics*" (p. 27).

The Middle Ages produced Scholastic philosophy: "It was such a barbarous, obscure, and quibbling philosophy, that it would hardly deserve the name philosophy, even if Aristotle had proposed it, with its litigious and foolish hair-splitting" (p. 32). The Scholastics were not only theologians, but essentially philosophers; they founded most of their dogmas on a spurious identification of reason with faith, "and having dedicated themselves to theology in their monasteries they very soon raised themselves by philosophy and set it up above theology. Therefore they deserve to be numbered among the philosophers rather than the theologians" (p. 30).

The starting point of modern philosophy was criticism of Scholasticism; Luther was at the beginning of the process of the reform of philosophy, but his teaching was soon disregarded and Scholasticism was taught again in the Protestant universities (p. 33). In the modern era people sought to reform philosophy in two ways: (1) by recovering the ancient Greek schools (Ficino, Lipsius, Gassendi, La Mothe Le Vayer), and (2) by developing new systems opposed to the ancient ones (Ramus, Descartes, Hobbes, Grotius). Neither of these procedures was judged to be adequate; in order to overcome radically and definitively the spirit of sectarian teaching and the prejudice of authority, it was essential to found a new method, that is, eclecticism, which was without doubt difficult, but "demanded exertion worthy of an honest and free man, while, on the contrary, sectarian philosophy demands the labour of asses" (p. 44).

5.1.4.4. Thomasius' *compendium* responded to two demands, which affected its content and method. As it was a work for popular use, it omitted learned references: the intention was to give some basic information to anyone who was interested in philosophical questions without being a professional philosopher. But the main objective was to go beyond a schools-based philosophy; the philosophical schools therefore were presented in an essentially negative way, demonstrating the inconsistency of sectarian philosophy and convincing those who studied the question of the superiority of eclecticism: "Therefore, as far as the philosophy of the schools is concerned, it could easily be demonstrated, and already has been demonstrated by others, that it is by no means necessary, and is not at all useful for the state; that the philosophers of the schools offend in the highest degree the laws of impartiality and modesty, since they overly exalt the head of their school and despise those who do not agree with him [. . .]. On the contrary, eclectic philosophy is extremely necessary because of the infinite variety of the things that there are to know; it is very useful for seeking the truth, and at the same time it is equitable and just, since it is not led by biased love but allows equal merit to all, and with moderation it warns individuals of errors that are contrary to the truth, and with modesty puts up with the admonitions of others, as it is not displeased with ancient things, nor does it despise things that are new" (pp. 42–43).

Thomasius aimed to be simple and clear: he used easy language with short sentences, avoided any kind of pedantry, which could bewilder and bore the reader, gave the main points of the ideas, and reduced the biographical notes to the essentials. The work consists mainly of a carefully compiled list of the schools of philosophy, with the names of their most famous representatives, a description of their origin and what happened to them subsequently. For example, when speaking of the Stoics, he mentions their dependence on Socrates, Plato, and the Cynics, but makes no reference to their teaching apart from the observation that it agreed with that of the Cynics, "having merely eliminated the impudence that those people had learnt from the Academics" (p. 17).

He records the teaching and the studies carried out by each leader of a philosophical school: "Plato was a philosopher trained in every kind of doctrine, which he drew not only from the Socratic school, but also from those of Pythagoras and Heraclitus, and he followed these schools in the various aspects of philosophy" (p. 13). These references allowed Thomasius to place each school in its appropriate position in the complex development of the history of philosophy, and to present the schools in an ordered sequence. In any case, this arrangement was closely linked to the purpose of the work which, as we have seen, was to give young students a text as an alternative to "scholastic" philosophy courses, differing from them in the usefulness of its content, simplicity of reasoning, and comprehensibility of language.

5.1.5. Thomasius's importance in philosophical historiography is due less to what he wrote and more to the role that he assigned to history of philosophy in the reform of the study of philosophy: "Finally, among the learned men of Germany, not only after philosophy had been reformed and corrected but also once the history of philosophy had been warmly recommended (whereas previously it had been neglected), at the beginning of the century, the great Christian Thomasius, who deserves eternal glory for combatting philosophical uncouthness, showed the way to follow, for he

had inherited this wealth from his father. He himself, on the other hand, inserted into his *Introductio ad philosophiam aulicam* an elegant compendium of history of philosophy, though not without some faults" (Brucker, I, pp. 37–38). It was certainly not the content of his brief outline of the history of philosophical schools, "a very brief outline of the history of philosophy in general" (Schmersahl, p. 9), that influenced later historiographical research; what was later considered praiseworthy, rather, was the insertion of the history of philosophy into the university curriculum, in contrast to all forms of sectarianism and dogmatism. "Thomasius is a liberator. This is how his contemporaries and successors judged him. He shook off the yoke of school philosophy and defined a new horizon, that of truth examined as a historical experience" (Braun, p. 97). The history of philosophy in Germany was for several decades to proclaim itself to be eclectic and Thomasian.

5.1.6. On the works of Ch. Thomasius and his philosophical and juridical ideas: Jöcher, IV, cols. 1158–1163; Gumposch, pp. 133–137; ADB, XXXVIII, pp. 93–102; *Christian Thomasius. Leben und Lebenswerk*, ed. M. Fleischmann (Halle, 1931); F. Battaglia, *Cristiano Thomasio, filosofo e giurista*, 2 Vols. (Rome, 1936); E. Bloch, *Christian Thomasius, ein deutscher Gelehrter ohne Misere* (Berlin, 1953); Id., *Naturrecht und menschliche Würde* (Frankfurt a.M., 1961); Hazard, pp. 155–179 ("Miracles Denied: Comets, Oracles and Sorcerers"); Wundt, pp. 19–61; Wolff, *Die Weltanschauung der deutscher Aufklärung*, pp. 27–45; F.M. Barnard, "The 'Practical Philosophy' of Christian Thomasius", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXXII (1971), pp. 221–246; W. Schneiders, *Naturrecht und Liebesethik. Zur Geschichte der praktischen Philosophie im Hinblick auf Christian Thomasius* (Hildesheim – New York, 1971); Id., "Leibniz-Thomasius-Wolff. Die Anfänge der Aufklärung in Deutschland", *Studia Leibnitiana*, Suppl. 12/1 (1973), pp. 105–121; F. Palladini, *Discussioni seicentesche su Samuel Pufendorf. Scritti latini: 1663–1700* (Bologna, 1978), pp. 356–364; *Christian Thomasius (1655–1728). Interpretationen zu Werk und Wirkung. Mit einer Bibliographie der neueren Thomasius-Literatur*, ed. W. Schneiders (Hamburg, 1989); H. Jaumann, *Critica. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Literaturkritik zwischen Quintilian und Thomasius* (Leiden, 1995), pp. 276–302; W. Schmidt, *Ein vergessener Rebell. Leben und Wirken des Christian Thomasius* (Munich, 1995); L. Klaus, "Von Samuel Pufendorf zu Christian Thomasius", in *Samuel Pufendorf und die europäische Frühaufklärung*, eds. F. Palladini and G. Hartung, pp. 137–146; S. Zurbucken, *Gewissensfreiheit und Toleranz. Zur Pufendorf-Rezeption bei Christian Thomasius*, ibi, pp. 169–180; *Christian Thomasius (1655–1728). Neue Forschungen im Kontext der Frühaufklärung*, ed. F. Vollhardt (Tübingen, 1997); A. Villani, *Christian Thomasius, illuminista e pietista* (Naples, 1997); P. Schroeder, *Christian Thomasius zur Einführung* (Hamburg, 1999); Id., *Eine vergleichende Studie zu Thomas Hobbes und Christian Thomasius* (Berlin, 2001); M. Kühnel, *Das politische Denken von Christian Thomasius* (Berlin, 2001); *Thomasius im literarischen Feld. Neue Beiträge zur Erforschung seines Werks im historischen Kontext*, eds. M. Beetz and H. Jaumann (Tübingen, 2003); Th. Ahnert, "Enthusiasm and Enlightenment. Faith and Philosophy in the Thought of Christian

Thomasius", *Modern Intellectual History*, II (2005), pp. 153–177; F. Tomasoni, *Christian Thomasius. Spirito e identità culturale alle soglie dell'illuminismo europeo* (Brescia, 2005); *Christian Thomasius (1655–1728) Wegbereiter moderner Rechtskultur und Juristenausbildung*, ed. H. Lück (Hildesheim, 2006); Chr. Böhr, *Friedrich Spee und Christian Thomasius über Vernünft und Vorurteil. Zum Geschichte eines Stabwechsels im Übergang vom 17. zum 18. Jahrhundert*, 2nd edn. (Trier, 2006); Th. Ahnert, *Religion and the Origins of the German Enlightenment. Faith and the Reform of Learning in the Thought of Christian Thomasius* (Rochester, N.Y., 2006); J. Hunter, "Christian Thomasius and the Desacralisation of Philosophy", in Id., *Rival Enlightenments. Civil and Metaphysical Philosophy in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge and New York, 2006), pp. 197–272.

On Thomasius's academic activity: Paulsen, *Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts*, Vol. I, pp. 524–540; R. Lieberwirth, "Ch. Thomasius' Verhältnis zur Universität Leipzig", in *Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig: Beiträge zur Universitätsgeschichte* (Leipzig, 1959), Vol. I, pp. 71–92. On his connections with Pietism: Tholuck, *Geschichte des Rationalismus*, pp. 107–119; Ritschl, *Geschichte des Pietismus*, Vol. II, pp. 545–560; Carré, "Le piétisme de Halle", pp. 283–292; L. Neisser, *Christian Thomasius und seine Beziehungen zum Pietismus* (Munich, 1928). His anti-Aristotelian position in Petersen, *Geschichte der aristotelischen Philosophie*, pp. 384–395; on his journalistic activity: Kirchner, *Das deutsche Zeitschriftenwesen*, Vol. I, pp. 21–28.

For the opinion of contemporaries on the historical part of the *Introductio ad philosophiam aulicam*: Jonsius, II, pp. 203–204; Stolle, pp. 550–551; Schmersahl, p. 9; Brucker, I, p. 38; VI, pp. 550–551; VI, p. 29.

On the history of philosophy in Thomasius: Braun, pp. 96–97; Del Torre, p. 42; Longo, *Historia philosophiae philosophica*, pp. 53–56; Schröder, *Spinoza in der deutschen Frühaufklärung*, *passim*; Zedelmaier, *Der Anfang der Geschichte*, pp. 61–76; Lehmann-Brauns, *Weisheit in der Weltgeschichte*, pp. 308–354; Varani, *Pensiero "alato" e modernità*, pp. 82–88, 158–162, 205–212.

5.2 Joh. Wilhelm Zierold (1669–1731)

Einleitung zur gründlichen Kirchen-Historie mit der Historia philosophica verknüpfft

Mario Longo

5.2.1. Among the historians of philosophy of the early eighteenth century, Zierold was the most involved in theological debate, as a declared exponent of the Pietistic movement. He was born in Oberwiesenthal in the Erzgebirge on 14th October, 1669, into a family exiled from Bohemia for religious reasons. He was a student at the University of Leipzig from 1681, at the time when the first *Collegia Pietatis* were spreading, founded by Ph. Spener, of whom Zierold would always be an enthusiastic follower and tenacious defender. At first he tried an academic career at Halle, but

from 1696 he chose to devote himself to pastoral work in Stargardt; after obtaining a doctorate at Halle in 1698 he combined this task with the chair of theology at the local *Collegium*. After his death in 1731, the town of Stargardt named an orphanage after him, in memory of his work among young people.

5.2.2. Nearly all of Zierold's writing was aimed at the defence of Pietism against the accusations of orthodox theologians, and extolling pure evangelical religion in the original spirit of Lutheranism. With this as his aim, he wrote predominantly in German, so that his works would have a wider circulation and be more effective in polemic. One of his first works was a history of the Church combined with the history of philosophy, in which he set out to demonstrate the danger of Aristotelianism and the derivation of Platonism from the Hebrew tradition: *Einleitung zur gründlichen Kirchen-Historie mit der Historia philosophica verknüpfft, darinnen die Krafft des Creutzes Christi als der einige Grund des wahren Christenthumbs wider die Feinde des Creutzes, von Anfang der Welt biss auff unsere Zeit* (Leipzig and Stargardt: bey Johann Nicolaus und Gottfried Ernsten Gebrüdere, 1700).

The works of this early period are notable for their vigorous arguments against false Aristotelian theology: *Dr. Martin Luthers evangelische Aufmunterung zur Liebe des Wortes Gottes wider der aristotelisch-scholastische Christenthum* (1700); *Die Ausrottung aller Heuchelei* (Frankfurt, 1700); *Der Eingang zu dem ewigen Reiche unsers Herrn J. Christi* (1700)*; Dreierlei Art Menschen in der Welt* (1701); *Analogia fidei per exegesin epistolae ad Romanos demonstrata* (1702); *Der Unterschied der wahren und falschen Theologie* (1703); *Gründliche Kirchen-Historie von der wahren und falschen Theologie in einem wiedergebornen Menschen von Anfang der Welt bis auf unsere Zeit* (1703); *Synopsis veritatis divinae* (1706); and *Pseudo-Orthodoxia theologorum sine fide* (Stargardt, 1708). In response to Thomasius's *Dissertatio de concubinato* he wrote the *Theologische Gedanken von der Heiligkeit des Ehestandes und von der Unheiligkeit des Concubinats* (1714).

In the later period his writings were mostly Bible commentaries: *Deutliche Erklärung schwerer Stellen heiliger Schrift aus der Bedeutung der hebräischen Buchstaben* (Leipzig, 1713–1716); *Theologiae vere evangelicae Libri III* (Berlin, 1706); *Schöne Jugend der Gottgeheiligten Samuel* (Leipzig, 1722); *Die Erneuerung des Ebenbildes Gottes in dem Menschen aus der Sonn- und Festagsevangelien des ganzen Jahres* (Frankfurt, 1714); *Der Prediger Salomo aus der Bedeutung der Hebräischen Buchstaben gründlich erklärt* (Leipzig, 1715); *Erklärung des Propheten Obadias* (Leipzig, 1719); and *Der Prophet Joel aus der Bedeutung der Hebräischen Buchstaben gründlich erklärt* (Leipzig, 1715).

5.2.3. In his preface ("An der Christlichen Leser"), Zierold set out the main aim of his book: to demonstrate that the truth of the Christian religion does not rest on the authority of man, nor, even less, on that of the pagans Plato and Aristotle, but exclusively on divine revelation. In accordance with the purest Lutheran conception, he affirmed the radical dichotomy between God and the world: everything that is worldly and human has its root in sin, in contempt of God, and in love of the senses: "Flesh and blood have embarked on more than a thousand erroneous paths. In this *Introduction* the true way of Christ is shown, and false ways, in which many people have fallen into error since the beginning of time, are condemned. As Satan has not

yet given up seducing mankind, I wish here to show his sinister ways, in the hope that God will not withhold his blessings but that some souls will be led by him away from the false path to the straight way of the Cross of Christ. The false paths are infinite, but there is on the contrary only one way that leads to God, and it seems as bitter to flesh and blood as it is sweet and lovely to the spirit".

The opposition between human and divine is the basis of his concept of philosophy: being a human construct, philosophy is to be rejected because it leads to contempt of the divine Word. There is an intrinsic conflict between religious truth and philosophical truth; Zierold, like St Paul, placed the mystery of Christ's passion and death, the *mysterium Crucis*, which no power is able to understand, at the centre of Christianity: "The wisdom of the Cross teaches what no eye can see, no ear can hear, and what cannot be found in the heart of man" (p. 7). The concept of philosophy is defined negatively: "That which is not in accordance with Christ (*Was nicht nach Christo ist*) and does not teach the simplicity of Christ" (p. 10). Thus, philosophy, being a human activity, implies a moving away from the truth, and Aristotle, who took to its logical conclusion the expression of man's intellectual self-sufficiency, was at the same time the greatest philosopher and the most tenacious enemy of the Cross.

The history of philosophy shows two divergent lines of development: on the one hand, divine truth has spread among the nations, and on the other, man has erected his own pseudo-truth against it. This battle began with the first men, Cain and Abel, and has continued with various vicissitudes up to our own days: Plato and Aristotle, the Church Fathers and heretics, Lutherans and Catholics. On one side is truth, the divine light, on the other, error, Satan's deception. But in every period Providence has acted; it has even used pagans to further Christianity: "We must rightly rejoice in divine Providence which decided to make known to the pagans many teachings of Holy Scripture through Pythagoras, as if to open up to them a way to Christianity. Subsequently, Plato and others travelled among the Hebrews, and the fame of the Hebrews was revealed to the Greeks, Romans, French, English, Germans and the other nations" (p. 188).

Like other historians of this period, Zierold emphasized the usefulness of the history of philosophy; as well as showing the arduous journey of the truth and the action of divine Providence, it leads man to condemn the foolish wisdom of the world and to extol the wisdom of Christ: "There is something good in this history: it consists of making the wisdom of the world appear foolish in comparison with the wisdom of Christ. No other false path in the world is as dangerous as that of carnal learned men who are not born again (in the spirit). Here, on the contrary, we show that true and right wisdom consists of a living knowledge of God and in the hidden power of the Cross of Jesus Christ" ("An den Christlichen Leser").

5.2.4. *Einleitung zur gründlichen Kirchen-Historie mit der Historia philosophica verknüpfft*

5.2.4.1. This book, dedicated to Frederick III of Prussia, consists of a Preface ("An den Christlichen Leser") and seven chapters, the longest of which (Chapter II, pp. 65–235) is devoted to an analysis of pagan philosophy: "Von Grund der

Historiae philosophicae, sonderlich von dem Klugen und albern Heydenthumb". The fifth chapter also shows the author's deep interest in the history of philosophy. In it, heretics and scholastics are discussed together: "Von Vermischung der Philosophie mit der Christlichen Theologie als den Ursprung aller Ketzerey, sonderlich des Pabstumbs" (pp. 334–367). The other chapters have more bearing on the history of the Church: the history of the Old Testament (Chapter I, pp. 1–64), the contamination of Judaism by paganism (Chapter III, pp. 235–292), the history of the New Testament, the Church Fathers and Scholasticism (Chapter IV, pp. 293–334; Chapter V, pp. 334–367); the Lutheran Reform (Chapter VI, pp. 367–382); the new Protestant Scholasticism and the rise of the Pietist movement (Chapter VII, pp. 382–407). In all there are 407 quarto pages. The chapters are divided into numerous paragraphs with their titles clearly set out at the side of the page, indicating the development of the subject and the main points of the argument. The text is supplied with long notes in Latin; there are no indices and the work concludes with a prayer.

5.2.4.2. The work is divided according to various criteria and modes of periodization as it is a history of the Church that extends into the history of philosophy. The most general division is that specific to ecclesiastical history: the Old Testament, New Testament and Protestant Reformation. The basic idea of the further sub-division is that all nations descended from the sons of Noah, which leads to an ethnical and geographical distinction corresponding to the account in Genesis: the populations of Asia (Persians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans), descended from Shem, the inhabitants of Africa (Ethiopians, Egyptians, and Libyans) from Ham, and the peoples of Asia Minor, Europe and America from Japhet.

At the point where the account deals more directly with the subject of the history of philosophy, when he discusses the Greeks and the Scholastics, the author feels it necessary to go back to the division of the schools of philosophy that had been proposed by seventeenth-century historiography. Citing Vossius, Zierold mentions the distinction between *philosophia fabulosa* and *philosophia non fabulosa*, and the three directions taken by the Ionics, Italics and Eleatics (cf. *Models*, I, p. 227). But this division of Greek philosophy, like the division of the Scholastics into three periods, goes no further than a list, while the account then continues chronologically: Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, the Epicureans, the Sceptics, and the Cynics. In any case, this procedure conforms with his idea of philosophy as progressive decay and departure from revealed truth until, with divine help, it comes rediscover the hidden wisdom of the Cross. Hence the most important moments in human history are the birth of Christ and the Protestant Reformation, which represent the beginning of happier periods in which the light of truth has come to shine again, but which too are destined eventually to become corrupt.

5.2.4.3. According to Zierold, philosophy originates from hatred of the Cross of Christ, but the seeds of divine wisdom are distributed even among the pagans who managed to sense the Truth by listening to the Hebrews and to their prophets: "Within the limits in which the ancient teachers deduced their doctrines from Scripture and were in harmony with it, they spoke the truth" (p. 3). The idea of the derivation of pagan wisdom from the Hebrews rests as the basis of Zierold's

interpretation of the whole history of philosophy. This link is proved not only by the testimony of the Church Fathers and by many recent historians (Huet, Grotius, Vossius) but also by a series of other factors, the first of which are ethical and historical: "After the flood, the world was populated by the sons of Noah. Abraham and his successors were the salt of the earth because the nations were able to escape becoming completely corrupted under the burden of fickle reason and lust. In particular, Moses was a light of the world who revealed the true God" (p. 65).

A second proof is provided by the superiority of the ancient Hebrew language, whose characters expressed the elements of wisdom in a direct way, and from the corruption of which all other languages derive. Thirdly, Zierold points out a close analogy between the dogmas expressed by the wisest of the pagans and those contained in Scripture. He speaks of the "parallel" between sacred and secular history, interpreted not according to the concordist criteria that had emerged during the Renaissance, and even less according to any possible influence of pagan theories on Scripture, but on the basis of the derivation of pagan teachings from the sacred text, which in fact remained misunderstood at the deepest level. The pagans, being "natural" men did not know how to preserve divine wisdom in its purity but "changed truth into a lie"; this formula, repeated with reference to all of the philosophers discussed, concludes with an appeal to seek the truth in Scripture alone.

The interpretation of the individual authors follows this scheme. The Eastern peoples, and in particular the Persians and Egyptians, received revealed wisdom from the mouth of the prophets. Zoroaster and Mercury, the mythical founders of their wisdom, were none other than Moses, as is confirmed by the biographical information referring to them and by the similarity of their teaching to Scriptural truth: the oneness of God, the immortality of the soul, the creation of the world and its end (p. 109). Moving on to the Greeks, Zierold concentrates on three authors: Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle. He approved of Pythagoras's philosophy most, because of its close links with Scripture: "Everything good that the other philosophers taught about God, nature and right living came from this source" (p. 170). Pythagoras was the *praeceptor* of Plato and Parmenides; all three knew God as Jehovah, the one who is, the greek *on*, "the one who exists in himself and through himself". Only God, Yahweh, can be said to exist, while all other things, created things, are not strictly speaking "beings". They owe their existence to something else, that is to God, who is above all things (pp. 174–175). The purpose of philosophy is to rise up towards God; this presupposes a deep understanding of man's miserable condition, an awareness of his sins.

Zierold compared the Platonic concept of the invisible nature of God, which agreed with Pythagorean teaching, with the Epistle to the Romans. In fact, Plato had a deep understanding of Scripture, which he had an opportunity of appreciating during his long travels in the East. In his *Leges* he showed that he sensed the mystery of the Trinity, in the *Politicus* he spoke of the sin of the first men, and in *Cratylus* he showed his understanding of the perfection of the Hebrew language. By portraying a Plato who could be assimilated to Christianity, the author was obliged to examine, in order then to criticise it, the interpretation made by Gassendi and Thomasius, and later, as we shall see, by Ch. Wolff, of Manichaeism as the essential component

of all pagan thought: "In particular, Plato is accused of teaching that things have a double origin, that is to say God and matter, but the most learned interpreters of Plato have shown that it is a false accusation [...]. On the contrary, Plato taught that prime matter was created by God and that God intended to create the world before the creation" (pp. 207–208). In confirmation of this, Zierold quotes a long note by Serranus on the *Timaeus*; the whole of this dialogue is understood in the Mosaic sense: God created the world by his Word, he separated day from night, and he created man in his own likeness.

Unlike Plato's philosophy, which was interwoven with Scriptural elements, that of Aristotle was an entirely human construct, since it rejects the wholesome principle of authority and thus cuts the links with the tradition and wisdom of ancient thinkers. "Aristotle did not recognise man's sin, and considered man to be so perfect that he could understand great wisdom by intelligence alone and through the use of external senses: there is nothing in the intellect that was not first in sense" (p. 213). This is linked to understanding through the senses and cannot rise to the contemplation of God and spiritual things. As he lacked wholesome *humilitas*, he placed ambition as the foundation of ethics and declared that the aim of virtue was honour. Aristotelian philosophy is negative, not only in content but also in method. Having strayed from the truth, Aristotle indicated a way of research that would have led to results that were at least formally consistent: thus he distinguished theory from practice "as if a theory that does not have a practice in itself could be good" (p. 217), and he devised the useless art of the syllogism: "Aristotle's theory is like a painted sun, which has no warmth in itself, and his followers have an equally empty understanding. So it is amazing that these people have been torturing themselves with empty thought ever since Aristotle placed theory above practice" (p. 218).

The discussion of Platonism and Aristotelianism is the theme which dominates the remaining chapters in Zierold's history of philosophy. At least two points are worth mentioning here: the Platonism of the Church Fathers, and the origins of heresy and Scholasticism in Aristotle. There is no doubt that the Church Fathers preferred Plato to Aristotle, but above all loved the Cross of Christ and the divine truth: "The early Christians loved Plato more than Aristotle because he took a large part of his teaching from Moses, and secondly because he did not cling as obstinately to his own opinions as did the others, who sought to put everything under their own control" (p. 313).

The origin of heresy, as of paganism, can be found in philosophy, and Aristotle, who took rational research devoid of the divine light to its ultimate consequences, is the patriarch (*der Erz-Vater*) of heretics. "Men are no longer willing to recognise the power of sin and darkness, and so they do not understand the fundamental principle of the Cross and do not know the mercy of God, but they declare the perfection of nature and particularly of reason. In other words, they erect their own opinion before God and are enemies of God" (p. 335). Hence, all heretics from Simon Magus to Arian and Pelagius, were enemies of the Cross, philosophers and Aristotelians.

At this point it is no longer surprising to find the Scholastics considered as heretics, not only for having shared particular heresies but also for having been followers of Aristotle. Contempt for Christ and love of Aristotle gave rise to systems of theology which, with the help of the Popes, gradually pervaded the Christian world and jeopardized understanding of the Bible. Zierold, as a good Lutheran, put much emphasis on the responsibility of the Popes in this process of debasing Christianity: "Aristotelian philosophy is the foundation of Popery" (p. 356). The Scholastics were worse than Aristotle; because of their ignorance of Greek, metaphysics was made the object of foolish abstractions, it became a *lexicon terminorum*, the battle ground for purely verbal disputes which, when applied to the area of theology without regard to Scripture, produced confusion. Among the mediaeval thinkers that Zierold respected were those who fought against the introduction of philosophical tricks into theology: Bede, Rhabanus Maurus, Bernard of Clairvaux, Pierre d'Ailly and Jean Gerson. The work concludes by praising the Lutheran Reformation, which had brought Christianity back to its original truth, and by declaring the urgent need for a second reform, as was being proposed by the Pietists at that time, to oppose the return to Aristotle on the part of Melancthon and the Protestant theologians.

5.2.4.4. Zierold's book is an apologia for Christianity and for religion, so the contrast between Scriptural truth and philosophy has the aim of devaluing human wisdom and exalting faith: "We rest firmly on the teaching of the orthodox evangelical church. We examine everything, but we keep the good and reject the bad. The word of God alone is the foundation of our truth" (p. 183). Thus the tool for distinguishing truth from error in pagan teachings is in the Word of God. That is to say, what conforms to it is a mark of divine wisdom, what is against it is the fruit of man's rational activity. The distinctive sign of true wisdom is, at all events, a recognition of the Cross: "The touchstone by which we examine the beliefs of the pagans and distinguish them from the Word of God is the Cross of our Saviour Jesus Christ" (p. 70).

The application of this criterion makes all philosophy that is pagan naturally useless, but it also offers the opportunity to re-assess some philosophers who were close to Biblical truth, such as Pythagoras and Plato, and to condemn, as wilful deniers of that truth, Aristotle, Epicurus, and the Scholastics: "If we compare Pythagoras with the hidden wisdom of the Word of God, we can do nothing else but reject him, together with the other pagans, because we do not find in him nor in them the Cross of Christ in which our one and true wisdom lies. But if we compare the pagans with each other, and especially if we compare Pythagoras and Plato with Aristotle, it is certain that Pythagoras and Plato had more wisdom in their little finger than Aristotle had in his whole body. That is to say, more truth can be found in a word of Pythagoras' than in a big book by Aristotle" (pp. 183–184).

The comparison between Plato and Aristotle is one of the dominant themes of Zierold's book, and is dealt with particularly in 43 points taken from a pamphlet by Francesco Patrizi, *Aristoteles Exotericus*, in which each theory of Plato is compared with an opposing one of Aristotle in order to show the superiority of Platonism and

its agreement with Christianity: "1. In many places, especially in the *Sophista*, in book VI of the *Respublica* and in the *Parmenides*, Plato teaches that there is only one God. Aristotle, on the other hand, teaches that in the beginning there is a prime mover (*primus motor*) and then another 56 movers of the celestial bodies [. . .]" (p. 220). Even biographical details are used to condemn Aristotle. While Plato was wise and virtuous, Aristotle was dissolute and ambitious: it was the devil himself who directed him towards philosophy, through the mouth of the Delphic oracle, since the devil realised that "Aristotelian philosophy would extend its reign and would be opposed to God's truth" (p. 212).

Zierold ofter refers to sources and works by other authors, but his references are mainly to the Church Fathers and ecclesiastical writers (Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, Cyril, Augustine, Huet, Edward Stillingfleet, and Christian Mornaeus) in whom it was easier for him to find a confirmation of his own interpretations. Among the historians of philosophy, he uses Laertius and Plutarch from the ancients, and Stanley, and particularly Vossius, from among the moderns. However, his most important quotations are taken from the Bible, especially the Epistles of St. Paul, on which his historiographical interpretation is mainly based. Zierold relies on Biblical examples to illustrate his point of view effectively; Aristotle's point of view is like the worm in the Gospel, and Aristotle is Ishmael the bastard son: "Therefore we should reject Hagar and Ishmael, the mother with the son, because the mocking Aristotle, like godless Ishmael who was the bastard son of the servant girl, was a bastard son of Platonic philosophy" (p. 224).

5.2.5. The presence of "Historia philosophica" in a work of Church history illustrates the later progress and the function of the genre in the period spanning the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The joining of these two disciplines was discussed at this time by Ephraim Gerhard (cf. below, Chapter 6, para 6.1). Prompted also by the publication of Buddeus' *Introductio ad historiam philosophiae Ebraeorum*, he saw the history of philosophy as an indispensable tool in the hand of the theologian, able to demonstrate the truth of Christianity. But while in Buddeus and other "eclectics" the philosophical component was not underestimated and was given, within certain limits, its own space, in Zierold, the Pietist and declared enemy of every form of so-called wisdom that did not recognise the Cross, philosophy was a purely negative wisdom, and his historiographical reconstruction was totally dependent on religious considerations. The parallel of Aristotelianism/Catholicism and Platonism/Lutheranism in fact aroused a reaction from orthodox religious circles: "We should be afraid of harm not only from the Papacy but also from our own band of fanatics" (Elswich, *De varia Aristotelis in scholis Protestantium fortuna*, p. 105).

As we have seen, Zierold's polemic against Aristotle is not conducted on philosophical grounds, but in an invective tone with accusations of false belief, heresy, and links with the Devil. His contemporaries criticised the historical worth of his work rather than its apologetic purposes: "His principal aim is to show how many vicissitudes and changes the Cross of Christ has experienced, and how it has been profaned by some, and by others purified and sanctified. Furthermore, he seeks to

demonstrate that the principles of true Christianity concerning the enlightenment of the soul, hatred of the world, purification of the heart, and union with God, did not first appear in the time of Plato and Pythagoras but are as ancient as Gospel truths and originated from the same source as our knowledge of salvation; however, he has not carried out his project very well, and in particular he has diluted it with notes based on philology and the history of literature which bear so little relevance to the subject that when one reads them one cannot help wishing 'that, God willing, the author had served us more abundant foods than he did' " (Reimmann, *Versuch*, pp. 700–701).

Zierold's work was seldom cited by later historians of philosophy. Although it is not in Stoll's catalogue, it was recorded, without comment, in the *Bibliotheca philosophica Struviana* and in a note in the *Historia critica* (Brucker, I, p. 38).

5.2.6. For Zierold's life and works: Jöcher, IV, cols. 2203–2204; ADB, XLV, pp. 20; Heinsius, IV, col. 516. For his adherence to Pietism: Ritschl, *Geschichte des Pietismus*, Vol. II, pp. 393–395; Petersen, *Geschichte der aristotelischen Philosophie*, pp. 412–414. On the later history and reception of his work: Jonsius, II, p. 172; J.F. Reimmann, *Versuch einer Einleitung in die Historiam literariam deren Teutschen*, Vol. V (Halle, 1710), pp. 700–701; J.F. Buddeus, *Historia ecclesiastica Veteris Testamenti* (Halle, 1719), Vol. I, p. 56; J.H. von Elswich, *De varia Aristotelis fortuna*, pp. 100–108; Struve, I, p. 160; Brucker, I, p. 38; Schmersahl, p. 28. The work is mentioned by Braun, p. 28.

5.3 Barthold Feind (1678–1721)

Geöffnete Schaubühne der fürnehmsten Welt-Weisen

Mario Longo

5.3.1. Barthold Feind was born in Hamburg in 1678. He studied Jurisprudence at the Universities of Wittenberg (1699) and Halle (1700), and then returned to his native city to practise as a lawyer. But he soon turned his attention towards literature, especially the theatre, in which he was influenced by the Italian and French models that he had discovered during his various journeys abroad. In the area of politics, he was a conservative and a moderate follower of Pietism. In 1707, when he was in France, he was banned from the city and his writings were condemned, at the instigation of his opponents. He settled at Stade where he worked as a tutor, but in 1709 he returned to Hamburg, completely rehabilitated. For two years (1717–1719) he was a prisoner of the Danes in their war with Sweden. He returned to his own country, and died two years later, in 1721.

5.3.2. Feind's literary production began with the work that will be discussed here: *Geöffnete Schaubühne der Fürnehmsten Welt-Weisen und deren Gesellschafften, vom Anfange der Welt biss auf gegenwärtige Zeiten. In einem deutschen Gedichte kürtzlich abgebildet und mit nöthigen Anmerckungen erkläret* (Frankfurt and Leipzig: bey Tobias Oehrlingen, 1702); the 2nd edn., of the poetic part only, in

Deutsche Gedichte, bestehend in musikal. Schauspielen, Lob-Glückwurschungsverliebten und Moralischen Gedichten (Stade, 1708; facs. repr., ed. W.G. Marigold, Bern and Frankfurt, 1989), pp. 563–599. This work, a history of philosophy in verse, is the only one of its kind in Germany, where the genre of the history of philosophy had acquired an almost exclusively scholastic purpose, especially with Thomasius and Buddeus.

After the satire *Das Lob der Geldsuch* (Hamburg and Leipzig, 1702; Cologne and Nuremberg, 1709), taken from a work by the Dutchman Jeremias van Decker, Feind wrote a politico-satirical comedy against the demagogy of politicians and popular agitators: *Das verwirrte Haus Jacob* (Hamburg, 1704; facs. repr., Bern and Frankfurt, 1983). This was followed by various tragedies, the favourite subject being the history of Rome: *Die Römische Unruhe oder die edelmütige Octavia* (Hamburg, 1705); *Die Kleinmütige Selbst-Mörderin Lucretia* (1705); *L'amore ammalato* (1708); *Julius Caesar* (1710); and *Rinaldo* (1715). In 1708 he collected most of his poetical works in the work *Deutsche Gedichte* quoted above, to which he added two introductory texts: *Von dem Temperament und der Gemuthsbeschaffenheit eines Poeten* (composed in 1702 and placed as a preface to the satire *Das Lob der Geldsuch*, in which the choleric temperament is defined as that most suitable for a poet) and *Gedanken von der Opera*, on the independence of the theatre as a literary genre (Italian trans. in L. Bianconi, *Il Seicento*, Torino, 1991 (*Storia della musica*, 5), pp. 329–344).

5.3.3. What prompted Feind to sing of the deeds of the philosophers in verse, following a very ancient custom that the author states in the "Vorbericht" he had found for the first time in the Bible, was not the theoretical task of the philosopher or theologian who takes the history of philosophy as an opportunity for extending knowledge of their academic disciplines. Rather, it was the desire to celebrate and to present as an example the life and wisdom of the great men who were famous for their learning. Thus the work is not erudite in character, the aim being to popularize the love of knowledge; it is not written for specialists but for beginners. The poet presents them with new characters, the various thinkers, on a continually changing stage: "Here the most excellent philosophers appear briefly and are just glanced at in a kindly way" ("Vorbericht").

The use of poetical language and the frequent reference to mythology are intended to increase our respect for the philosophers, those great heroes of humanity who have been able to pass down to us the seeds of wisdom: "The great circle of the world bows down to your spirit/since virtue, art and zeal adorn you for ever./Blessed is the state, blessed the government/in which the seed of your wisdom is shown in men's souls".[7] Like all of Feind's poetical work, which was based on political and

[7] "Das grosse Rund der Welt ist eurem Witz geneigt/Weil Tugend, Kunst und Fleiss euch ewig, ewig zieren/Glückseelig ist der Staat, glückseelig sein Regieren/Wo euer Weissheit Kern sich in den Seelen zeigt!" (*Geöffnete Schaubühne*, CXXIV, p. 39; the Roman numeral denotes the order of the octaves).

civic aspirations, the history of philosophy aims at the attainment of happiness by nations, by showing them the path to knowledge and philosophy.

5.3.4. *Geöffnete Schaubühne der fürnehmsten Welt-Weisen*

5.3.4.1. The *Schaubühne* consists of two distinct parts: the first has 126 octaves (pp. 1–40) and contains the history of philosophy and its schools from the beginning of the world up to the modern era. Next, as a complement and commentary on the part in verse, Feind describes the lives of the philosophers and the contents of some of their systems of thought in the "Anmerckungen" (pp. 41–319). This second part is well supplied with quotations from the authors of histories of philosophy, nearly always quoted in the original language without a German translation. The work is preceded by a dedication to the jurist Peter Westermann and by a Preface ("Vorbericht. Geneigter Leser"); there are no indices.

5.3.4.2. The part of the work written in verse is not sub-divided according to the different periods of the history of philosophy, but instead the philosophers appear on the stage one after another according to the order of the schools to which they belonged. The problems of division into periods are accentuated in the "Anmerckungen", where Feind, referring to Ch. Thomasius and Vossius, divides philosophy into ante-diluvian (Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch and Noah) and post-diluvian, and the latter into barbarian (Chaldeans, Persians, Indians, Phoenicians, Egyptians, Ethiopians, Thracians and Druids) and Greek. The division of Greek philosophy into *fabulosa* and *non-fabulosa*, and the latter into Ionics and Italics, contrasted with Sceptics and Eclectics (Potamon of Alexandria), also goes back to Vossius' scheme (cf. *Models*, I, p. 227).

The division into periods is of only marginal importance in Feind's work, since he is more concerned with illustrating the individual philosophers than with putting each of them into a precise historical setting. This can be seen particularly in his description of philosophy in the Roman period and in the modern era. Firstly, the philosophers are put into groups according to their schools: Stoics, Platonists, Epicureans, Peripatetics, but without distinguishing the periods in which they lived. Among the Platonists, Ficino, Bessarion, Pico della Mirandola, and Politian can be found alongside the ancient thinkers: Apuleius, Calcidius, Iamblichus, Plotinus, Basilides, and the Gnostics. Among the Aristotelians, the ancients are completely ignored and representatives of the sixteenth century are cited: Nifo, Piccolomini, Zabarella, Cremonini. Next, Feind goes back to the Scholastics and then to the opponents of Scholasticism, among whom he mentions some authors already spoken of, such as Ficinus. At the end of the work the thinkers whom the author considers typical of modern philosophy appear: Ramus, Erasmus, Melanchthon, Luther, Descartes, J.B. Van Helmont, Fludd, and Alsted.

5.3.4.3. The Eastern people are discussed at length, before the Greeks, since the author reckons, contrary to the over-biased opinion of Laertius, that Greek philosophy was indebted to that of the Barbarians. This origin can be seen particularly in the Italic tendency and in the atomists. For example, Pythagoras "sought to find out about the furthest Barbarian regions and learnt to understand the books

of the Hebrews and fathomed the writings of the Persians and Chaldeans" (LXII, p. 20). Feind's interpretation of atomism follows the line indicated by Burnet (cf. *Models*, I, p. 355) and supported by Robert Boyle; according to them, Democritus had acquired his ideas from the Phoenicians and through them from the Bible: "In order to confirm this opinion, he [Boyle] declares in the introduction to his *Experimental Chemistry* that long before Democritus and Leucippus there was an expert in natural sciences among the Phoenicians who had interpreted all the phenomena of nature by the movement and property of atoms [. . .]. There is no doubt that this Phoenician was the Mochus whom we have already mentioned" (*Geöffnete Schaubühne*, pp. 216–217).

The Greeks were exceptional, compared with the Barbarians, in applying themselves to the study of nature with art. They investigated the world according to science; in this way they reached a deeper understanding of reality: "They shine where no star of the sky can shine" (XXII, p. 7). The founder of Ionic philosophy was not Thales, considered as the first of the Seven Wise Men, but Anaximander, followed by Anaximenes, Anaxagoras and Archelaos the teacher of Socrates, "who raised up his head so high through his learning that no one can stand in comparison with him" (XXXI, p. 10). However, Feind does not agree with the contemporary opinion that Socrates was the first moral philosopher, since it was unlikely that all of his predecessors should have ignored this fundamental teaching.

Feind's account of Plato and Aristotle does not address the interpretative problems of their teachings, but simply praises their character and writings: "So Uranius introduced the great Plato, the very image of what can elevate the human spirit; the arts gathered around him to show a model to the astonished world"; "after their departure, Aristotle arrived, whom Phoebus himself led into the order of the most learned men".[8] In the "Anmerckungen" Feind mentions the dispute that arose between the Platonists and the Aristotelians of the fifteenth century but does not examine the systems of the two schools: "considering that no expert will come looking for them in our book, we will stop here" (p. 152).

Feind seems to have been more interested in describing some aspects of Stoic and Epicurean teaching. He clarifies the Stoics' contradictory way of conceiving God: "sometimes a spirit, or a divine soul separated from his works, that is from the world, sometimes as a spirit living in the world" (p. 173), but he criticises in particular their concept of "fate" and their indifference in the area of mortality: "Hence they fell into this nasty error: they wrote amazing things about the power of destiny – Zeno's opinion opened the way to this by saying that everything comes from the whim of chance. He also spread the seductive poison of the possibility of choosing between sins: murder or theft, slander or resentment, envy or hatred, all of them are of equal

[8] "Drauf führt' *Uranie* den grossen *Plato* auf/Ein Bild, wie hoch ein Geist des Menschen könne steigen./Bey ihm versammleten die Künste sich zu Hauf/Der Wunderbahren Welt ein Muster vorzuzeigen" (XXXVIII, p. 12); "Nach ihren Abzug kam der *Aristoteles*/Den *Phoebus* selbsten zog' zum Hochgelahrten Orden" (XLVII, p. 15).

importance".[9] He had similar reservations about Epicurus, not because of his concept of pleasure but because he denied the divinity: "He opposed the majesty and power of God and shamelessly refused to acknowledge his presence" (LXXV, p. 24).

Feind's most negative judgement is reserved for the Scholastics: the author despises the way in which they combined philosophy and theology, this being the principal cause of the corruption of Christianity. This accusation had already been made by Tribbechow, and Feind adds a criticism of their barbaric and incomprehensible language: "After these, there is a long line of those who took the title of teachers. They attributed too much authority to the Stagirite and showed great respect for this pagan philosopher. They adopted an uncouth way of expressing themselves; therefore if one has to judge by the sound of their words, the sense of what they say will be judged unfavourably. Come, O Papist, explode in your purple rage!".[10]

In their language too the men who opposed Scholasticism are to be preferred: Valla, Theodore Gaza, Marsilio Ficino and most of all Erasmus; but Feind concentrates mainly on philosophers who were able to construct something new, especially Ramus and Descartes. The latter is praised unconditionally (*O dreymahl grosser Geist*, CXVI, p. 37), and Feind defends him against Voëtius' accusation of atheism: "Descartes showed with well-founded arguments how unfoundedly he [Voëtius] had offended his honour and ideas. He believed that man is composed of body and spirit, that the supreme God really exists and that he supplies the needs of everything in the world".[11]

5.3.4.4. The narrative form is not the same in the poetic part of the book and the "Anmerckungen". In the former, the author's intention is to offer "only a small taste" (p. 185) of the life and work of the most illustrious philosophers with an essentially celebratory purpose. As the various figures appear on the scene the poet praises their intelligence and perception in high-flown language, as we have seen in connection with Plato and Aristotle; his recourse to mythology has the aim of raising the tone of his account and of stimulating the reader's respect and admiration. This is aided by the poetic fiction of the theatre stage on which the philosophers appear, one after the other, to show the spectator the excellence of their lives and their learning.

---

[9] "Dannoch verleiteten sie dieser arge Wahn/Sie schrieben Wunder zu dem mächtigen Geschicke/Jn dem des *Zeno* Spruch den Leuten brach die Bahn/Dass alles hergerührt bloss von des Glückes Tücke./Er hat auch diesen Gifft verführisch ausgestreut/Dass alle Sünde gleich, Ermorden oder Stehlen/Verleumdung oder Groll, Neid oder Hass erwehlen/Weil dieses alles sey von gleicher Wichtigkeit" (LVII, p. 18).

[10] "Nach diesen zeigten sich in einer langen Reyh/Die, so von einer Schul der Lehrer Nahmen führen./Sie massen allzuviel dem Stagyriten bey/Und liessen grosse Ehr für diesem Heyden spühren./Sie führten wieder ein der Mund-Art Barbarey/Drum, wenn man ihren Klang der Wörter solt' entscheiden/So würde ihr Verstand ein schlimmes Urtheil leiden/Komm Päbstler, berste nun vor grüner Gall' entzwey!" (CIV, p. 33).

[11] "So zeigt *Cartesius* mit Gründen der Vernunfft/Wie ungegründt er ihn an Ehr und Lehr verletzet./Er glaubte, dass der Mensch aus Leib und Geist gemacht/Und dass der grosse Gott ein wahres Wesen wäre/Der alles in der Welt recht väterlich ernehre" (CXIX, p. 38).

The notes are fairly long: in them the author describes the life and teaching of the philosophers and addresses some problems of historiographical interpretation. For example, when referring to Epicurus (pp. 221–230) he records the year of his birth, the names of his father and mother, his training in philosophy and his reading of the texts of Democritus, but also his refusal to recognize anyone as his master. He then dwells on the central question of how to understand Epicurean "pleasure": whether it refers exclusively to the body, or rather to the pleasure of learning and hence something that concerns the soul rather than the body. The author gives various assessments of Epicurus, quoting Cicero, Origen, Luther, Hornius, Lucretius, Gassendi and Omeis, and then comes to the conclusion with these latter writers that slanders about the Epicureans came from the Stoics, but that in reality Epicurus lived according to a model of wisdom that could not be reconciled with the identification of happiness with carnal pleasure: "Epicurus lived in great serenity with his pupils; he was little concerned with the praise of the world or with vain luxury, he despised and condemned the hypocrisy and boasting of the Stoics; instead, he sought satisfaction in his solitary garden and considered himself happy if by living modestly he could devote himself to study" (p. 217).

The comments on the other philosophers are not always as complete and meticulous as this; in fact, some remarks seem out of proportion. Thinkers not usually considered to be in the first rank, such as Anaxagoras (pp. 109–116), are treated at much greater length than others normally regarded to be of fundamental importance, such as Plato and Aristotle. This disproportion is a consequence of the author's aim, which was to illustrate the poetic section with those aspects that might not have been so well known to the reader.

5.3.5. Although Feind declared that he was not writing a book for specialists, we can see evidence of a good scholarly background in the "Anmerckungen". This is shown by his thorough knowledge of previous histories of philosophy; among them the author cites particularly often those of Cozzando and Vossius. Moreover, the historiographical range is the widest possible, since he goes right back to Adam, as Brucker was to do later, and up to the modern philosophers.

Feind's history of philosophy represents an isolated case in the panorama of German historiographical literature in the eighteenth century, not only because of the extrinsic fact of being written in verse, but above all because of the absence of any precise theoretical or polemical purpose, which had, with the establishment of the eclectic school, become a characteristic factor in historico-philosophical research. For this reason, it was to receive little attention from later historians: Stolle cited Feind but not for this particular work (Stolle, pp. 255, 267); Brucker mentioned him in passing in a note, in order to emphasize his dependence on Vossius: "He set out in German verse the fundamental points of the history of philosophy, which he then explained in prose, drawing a large part of it from Vossius" (Brucker, I, p. 38). Heumann declared, taking up a review that appeared in the "Monatliche Auszüge aus neuen Büchern" (March 1702), "it is a history of philosophers composed in fairly good German verse" (Heumann, III, p. 791), but added nothing on the historiographical value of the work.

5.3.6. On Feind's life and work: Jöcher, II, cols. 544–545; ADB, VI, pp. 607–608; NDB, V, pp. 60–61; Hensius, I, col. 861. On his literary and journalistic work: Gumposch, p. 277; Kirchner, *Das deutsche Zeitschriftenwesen*, Vol. I, pp. 47–48; A. Guse, *Zu einer Poetologie der Liebe in Textbüchern der Hamburger Oper (1678–1738). Eine Fallstudie zu Heinrich Elmenhorst, Christian Friedrich Hunold und Barthold Feind* (Univ. Diss., Ann Arbor, Mich., 1999). For the opinion of contemporaries: Heumann, III, pp. 791–92; Brucker, I, p. 38. The book is mentioned by Braun, p. 375.

5.4 Johann Christoph Wolf (1683–1739)

Manichaeismus ante Manichaeos et in Christianismo redivivus

Mario Longo

5.4.1. Johann Christoph Wolf continued the seventeenth-century tradition of philologist historians of philosophy. He was born in Wernigerode in Upper Saxony in 1683; he received a doctorate in philosophy from Wittenberg at the age of 23. His interests very soon turned towards the study of ancient Eastern languages; he became a famous philologist and a tireless hunter of ancient documents and manuscripts. In order to recover these and to read them he made various journeys to libraries abroad, to Oxford (1709) and to Leyden (1724). For three years, from 1709 to 1712, he was temporary professor of philosophy at Wittenberg; later, he occupied the chair of Oriental languages at Hamburg, where he also served as a pastor. He held these positions until his death in 1739. He devoted the last twenty years of his life to the writing of vast works of scholarship, culminating in the compilation of his *Bibliotheca Hebraica*; in drafting this he made use of material, especially unpublished manuscripts, that he had brought back from Leyden.

5.4.2. Wolf's main activity was as a philologist, as testified to by his various editions of the Classics (Phaedrus, Libanius) and the Church Fathers (Theophilus). This was the context of his interest in the history of philosophy, which led him to republish the *Philosophumena*, previously published by Gronovius, under the title *Compendium historiae philosophicae antiquae sive Philosophumena, quae sub Origenis nomine circumferuntur* (Hamburg, 1706); it was introduced by a preface in which it was pointed out that "the author of the book is uncertain to such an extent that neither the opinions and conjectures of Huet nor those of Gale or Gronovius about who he is are supported by any strong arguments". The Greek text, with Gronovius' translation, is divided into chapters, each corresponding to one philosopher; the editor's notes, as well as correcting the Latin text, describe Greek classical literature and expound the *placita* of the philosophers. Among the subjects dealt with, the following are worth mentioning: the origin of the term *hairesis* and its significance in the ancient world (p. 2), the divisions of philosophy and the birth of the study of logic (p. 4), and the derivation of heresies from pagan thought (p. 17).

Wolf was interested, above all, in Hebrew literature: *Historia lexicorum Hebraeorum, quae tam a Judaeis quam a Christianis ad nostra usque tempora*

in lucem vel edita vel promissa sunt vel in bibliothecis adhuc latentia deprehenduntur (Wittenberg, 1705); *Casauboniana* (Hamburg, 1710); *Bibliotheca Hebraica sive notitia tum auctorum Hebraeorum cuiuscumque aetatis, tum scriptorum, quae vel Hebraice primum enarrata vel ab aliis conversa sunt, ad nostram aetatem deducta* (Hamburg and Leipzig, 1715, to which he added a second part in 1721 containing, among other things, the history of the codices and manuscripts of the Old Testament); *Curae philologicae in Vetus Testamentum,* 4 Vols. (Hamburg, 1722–1724); *Bibliotheca Aprosiana* (Hamburg, 1734); *Conspectus supellectilis epistolicae et litterariae manu exarratae* (Hamburg, 1736).

Wolf took up his interest in the history of philosophy on several occasions, but his work on the subject mostly dates back to the period when he was teaching philosophy at Wittenberg. These are academic works: *De mithica moralia tradendi ratione nov-antiqua* (Wittenberg, 1704); *De Zabiis contra Spencerianam hypothesin* (Wittenberg, 1706); *Manichaeismus ante Manichaeos et in Christianismo redivivus* (Hamburg: sumptibus Christiani Libezeiti, 1707), in which he presented a general outline of the history of philosophy in relation to his research into the sources of ancient and modern Manichaeism; *De scepticismo philosophico eiusque causis* (Wittenberg, 1710); *Dissertatio de atheismi falso suspectis* (Wittenberg, 1710).

5.4.3. Johann Christian Wolf was not a historian of philosophy by profession, but he came into contact with it as he collected questions arising from the philological study that he found more congenial. We can place his historiographical works in the context of the discipline of philology, as in the case of the publication of the *Philosophumena* of pseudo-Origen, in which interest in the historical context goes hand in hand with his aim of offering the text in its purity.

5.4.4. *Manichaeismus ante Manichaeos et in Christianismo redivivus*

5.4.4.1. The long title of the book enables us to grasp its contents and objectives: *Manichaeismus ante Manichaeos et in Christianismo redivivus, sive Tractatus historico-philosophicus, quo non solum historice ostenditur dogma Manichaeorum de duobus principiis, Bono altero, altero Malo, in plerorumque inter Gentiles philosophorum, inter Christianos autem haereticorum sectariorumque tam veterum quam recentiorum scholis receptum fuisse; sed et ex ratione erroris huius pestilentissimi vanitas demonstratur. Praeterea ob argumenti affinitatem enarratur historia motuum ac controversiae a Baelio nuper in Belgio motae, quippe qui improbo conatu ostendere allaboravit Dei bonitatem in rationis humanae foro a malitiae labe ob permissum liberi Arbitrii abusum vindicari nullo modo posse, nisi Manichaeorum approbetur systema; cuius persuasionis vanitas simul ob oculos ponitur, eademque opera Arbitrii libertas a Baelio temere oppugnata adstruitur, novaque Kingii eaque periculosa de libertatis ratione hypothesis modeste examinatur*. Here, Manichaeism is not understood as a particular heresy or school, but, on the model of Buddeus's *De Spinozismo ante Spinozam*, is taken as a historical category which makes it possible to interpret a large part of the history of philosophy, emphasizing the persistence of a conception of reality, that of fundamental

dualism, that had been opposed to the truth of the Judaeo-Christian religion since the earliest times.

After a brief introduction (pp. 1–10), with a summary of the question under discussion, the author divides the work into three sections: (1) "which examines the origin of the false opinion regarding the two opposing principles" (pp. 10–32); (2) "which demonstrates the universal spread of this error" (pp. 22–105); this is the historical part, divided in turn into twenty-seven paragraphs without headings; and (3) "which demonstrates the falsity of the doctrine of the two principles" (pp. 305–352). There are no indices, and no footnotes of any kind; the numerous bibliographical references are inserted within the text.

5.4.4.2. The birth of Christ represents the fundamental point dividing the historical material into two periods. The first coincides with the history of Ancient thought; the second describes the history of the Manichaean heresy within the Christian world. The division into periods broadly follows that of Vossius; the chronological order is observed, but within this there is an ethnico-geographical division: (1) Hebrews; (2) Barbarians; (3) Greeks; and (4) Latins. The internal division of Greek philosophy also respects the historiographical tradition: a first phase, in which philosophy was linked to myth and poetry (Homer, Orpheus), is followed by the great period of Greek philosophy, developed according to the two lines of the Ionic School (Academics, Peripatetics, and Stoics) and the Italic School (Pythagoras, Eleatics, and Atomists).

After Christ, the parallel between the history of philosophy and the history of Manichaeism ends; the latter became a heresy, long fought against by the Christian Fathers and hardly ever shared by mediaeval and modern philosophers. The inheritors of the Manichaean tradition were the Gnostics, the Manichaeans strictly speaking, and all the schools that harked back to them: the Seleucians and Messalians in ancient times, the Albigensians in the Middle Ages, the "fanatics", Pietists and Quakers in the modern era.

5.4.4.3. Following the lead of Jakob Thomasius (cf. *Models*, I, pp. 430–431), Manichaeism is understood here as an essential component of all ancient thought, in that it was pagan thought: "Scorning revelation, the pagans slackened the reins of reason and finished up by forming that famous and commonplace axiom: *ex nihilo nihil fit*" (p. 20). In order to explain evil and the finite, the pagans were obliged to resort to a second metaphysical principle, the god of evil or matter, so as to judge what experience openly showed to exist but which could not, because of its imperfect nature, be attributed to the principle of good. Thus Manichaeism was the very root of paganism, since it implied ignorance or misunderstanding of the Mosaic doctrine of creation.

While the barbarian peoples had affirmed the existence of divinities in opposition to each other, the Greek philosophers placed the root of evil in matter, co-eternal with God and not created: the world is the result of divine action on matter which is inert and insensitive to goodness, and is inevitably a mixture of good and evil, of good and bad things. Platonic philosophy is symbolic of this idea. Wolf explained that "Plato had considered matter to be eternal, to which he added God as the creator

limited by inert and refractory matter, so that in this universe there appears a mixture of good things and bad things" (p. 124). On this basis, the author judged that Christian teaching was essentially irreconcilable with Platonism and condemned those who, by mixing Platonism and Christian teaching, were guilty of that philosophical syncretism, "which, very wise men have warned, was the cause of the great corruption of the divine principles of Christianity" (p. 125).

In his definition of the relationship between God and matter, Aristotle followed Plato; in fact he was more Manichaean than his master, because "he attributed even greater importance to matter than did his master. While he [Plato] allowed that God had the greatest freedom to give form to matter so as to establish that the world had taken its present form not from eternity but at a time fixed by God, Aristotle deprived God of this freedom, uniting him with matter by a very close link" (pp. 145–146). But the Greek system in which Manichaeism can most clearly be traced was Stoicism: the world originated from two principles, one active (*quod ageret*), which corresponds to God, one passive (*quod pateretur*) which coincides with matter and is the cause of evil (p. 151). Moreover, the Stoics were inconsistent, because they spoke boldly of liberty and divine providence without realizing that in their system matter formed a curb and a limitation to God's creative activity. In general, all the ancient systems were contradictory: "You will say: how were they able to persuade themselves of this after they had defined matter in itself as being devoid of every quality, totally abandoned to the divine will and obedient to the command of the divine creator? Will it not seem stranger to you, as soon as you learn that this was the common fault of the Ancients, that is, to form systems that were internally inconsistent and which few bothered to connect with themselves, nor did they put in proper order the teachings that they were defending" (pp. 156–157).

Despite this inconsistency, and their implicit Manichaeism, Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics cannot, according to Wolf, be defined as atheists. Atheistic philosophers did exist among the Greeks: these were the "monists" who accepted one unique principle of reality of a material order. For example, the Ionic school comprised two classes of philosophers: (1) the monists, that is, atheists: Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes; and (2) the dualists, that is, Manichaeans: Anaxagoras, Diogenes of Apollonia, and Archelaus. Representatives of the Eleatic school, from Xenophanes and Parmenides to the atomists, and Epicurus, who "excluded material cause completely from the creation of the world" (p. 124), were without doubt atheists and materialists.

The birth of Christ offered the possibility of recovering the truth that had been lost; from this moment onwards Manichaeism continued in the form of a heresy. Among the Christians, Simon Magus, the father of the dualists, was followed by Menander, Saturninus, Basilides, Carpocrates and the other Gnostics. They were copied by Mani "who strove with great zeal to adorn and defend this error, so that its supporters took the name of Manichaeans" (p. 215). Wolf placed the Pietists and fanatics in general among the Manichaeans: "I would not hesitate to deduce that the most important, if not all, of the teachings of the fanatics and Pietists come, like so many streams from a single source, from this very ancient error, which Satan introduced into [earthly] Paradise" (p. 280). As an example, he describes the doctrine,

Platonist in origin, taken up again by the Gnostics and shared by the fanatics, that the human soul is "part of the divine breath".

In the third part, Wolf demonstrates the error of Manichaeism, in answer to Bayle, who had declared that "this doctrine of the two principles cannot be defended once one admits the authority of Holy Scripture; on the other hand, it can only be eradicated with difficulty, given that it is supported by the pagan philosophers, who are well versed in the art of debate" (p. 329). The basis of Bayle's teaching was the impossibility of proving free will and man's moral responsibility rationally. Wolf took Bayle to task for not agreeing with the teaching of Reformed theology on this point, and repeated, among other arguments, one dear to the Scholastics, in favour of human freedom: "They believe that God provided man with free will as a kind of complement of nature. In fact, they say that as there is something that acts and is not acted upon, like God, something that is acted on and does not act, like nature which is without reason, it was right that something should exist that is acted on and acts, that is man, who acts in freedom and at the same time is urged by God to choose what is good" (p. 401).

5.4.4.4. The main aim of Wolf's book was to show how widespread Manichaean error was in ancient philosophy. This kind of research involved a particular type of exposition that seldom dwelt on all parts of the philosophical systems, but concentrated especially on interpretation and polemical debate. Leaving aside the life of the philosophers and the list of their works, the historian went directly to the definition of God, which was characteristic of every system of ancient philosophy, and examined its relationship with the notion of creation, in order to discover analogies and differences.

At the beginning of the book Wolf quotes opinions expressed by ancient and modern historians, and reaches a preliminary judgement by comparing these testimonies; this is then validated by careful reference to the texts of the philosophers. It is in fact this close adherence to the ideas of the ancient philosophers through a precise reading on the texts, often given in the original language, that distinguishes Wolf's book from the writings of others. Plato's philosophy is reconstructed on the basis of references from ancient and modern authors such as Plutarch, Plotinus, Proclus, Maximus of Tyre, Photius, Jakob Thomasius, Le Clerc, Huet, Isaac Jacquelot, and Bayle, but Wolf also quoted some passages from *Timaeus*, together with brief citations from the *Respublica* and the *Politicus*. In this way Wolf was able to make a distinction between Plato's position and that of the Neoplatonists, who "wanted to make people believe that he [Plato] denied that the world had a beginning [...]. One should not marvel at this, given that the Neoplatonists (*Platonici juniores*) have adapted Plato's principles to the teachings of the Christians and of Aristotle" (p. 128). He quotes a passage from the *Politicus*, disputing Plutarch's opinion that Plato had believed inanimate matter to have a soul: "'there is no way in which two divinities opposed to each other could have made the world turn'. These excellent words of the philosopher will be worth more to honest and just experts of these matters than the obscure and extravagant conjectures of Plutarch" (p. 137).

In accordance with the purpose of the work, Wolf does not examine thoroughly the philosophy of any writer being discussed: instead, the whole work is aimed at defining the nature of the theological system, that is, concentrating on the definition of God and his relationship with the world and evil. The basic concept on which his judgements are based is the Christian idea of creation, the true meaning of which is traced in the Genesis account. The eclipse of this idea is identified with the decline into paganism and heresy.

Manichaeismus ante Manichaeos looked at in its entirety proves to be a work at the same time polemic and erudite: there are hundreds of quotations and bibliographical references, which show a vast knowledge of the literature on the subject. Sometimes the book can be difficult to read because the thread of the argument is broken by bibliographical cross-references and by the inclusion of passages from texts in their original languages. The historiographical method is largely philological in its search for an accurate and objective interpretation of the ancient writers, but the theoretically committed context leads the author necessarily to express a judgement on his material.

5.4.5. *Manichaeismus ante Manichaeos* is a composite work that answers various needs. It forms part of the debate over Manichaeism that Bayle had made topical towards the end of the seventeenth century, but at the same time the book claims to be, as in the title, a *Tractatus historico-philosophicus*. As in Zierold's work, the theological theme is very important. However, it differs in at least two aspects: the author was a critic of Pietism and this made him an isolated case in the philosophical historiography of the period; secondly, there is a pronounced emphasis on philology, which led the author to give greater attention to the sources and a more direct approach to the philosophical texts. The *Mémoires de Trevoux*, while not sharing such a wide definition of Manichaeism, appreciated Wolf's work because of the seriousness and completeness of the documentation: "He is sincere in his errors, and records faithfully what can be used to correct them. His work is based on a prodigious amount of reading, assimilated better than is usual in the writings of learned men. He points out all the passages from both ancient and modern authors in which the two principles are spoken of" (MT, XVII, 1710, pp. 975–976).

Manichaeismus ante Manichaeos had quite a wide circulation, as is shown by the reviews that appeared in influential European journals: however they did not fail to emphasise some deficiencies. The *Journal des Sçavans* criticized the continual digressions and the excessive use of quotations which, being inserted in the text, made it almost impossible to read: "There are certain pages in which, if one wishes to follow the thread of the argument, one has to go through dozens of proper names, with as many numbers and titles of books" (JS, II, 1708, p. 226).

5.4.6. On Wolf's life: Jöcher, IV, coll. 2053–2055; BUAM, LXIV, pp. 101–102, ADB, XLIV, pp. 545–548. The list of works in Heinsius, IV, col. 454; BG, 1723, pp. 229–233. Wolf's position on Aristotle in Petersen, *Geschichte der aristotelischen Philosophie*, p. 380. Reviews of *Manichaeismus ante Manichaeos* in journals of the period: AE, 1707, pp. 499–504; JS, 1708, pp. 219–226; MT, XII (1710), pp. 972–997. For the opinion of contemporaries: Jonsius, IV, pp. 215–216; Stolle, pp. 603,

606; Brucker, I, p. 33. For his interpretation of Neoplatonism: Varani, *Pensiero "alato" e modernità*, pp. 109–115.

5.5 Joh. Franz Buddeus (1667–1729)

Compendium historiae philosophiae
Theses de atheismo et superstitione

Mario Longo

5.5.1. German philosophical historiography in the first half of the eighteenth century, from Walch to Gentzken and Brucker, is to a great extent linked to the figure and work of Johann Franz Budde (Buddeus). He clearly grasped the theoretical importance of the history of philosophy in relation to philosophical and theological research, and did his utmost, by his example and teaching, to spread the discipline more widely in the context of philosophical culture and especially that of university studies.

He was born at Anklan in Pomerania in 1667 into a strictly orthodox Lutheran family. He studied Oriental Literature, Theology and Philosophy at the University of Wittenberg, specializing in Classical Languages and Hebrew. His whole life was dedicated to teaching; he took a doctorate in philosophy, and when he was just over twenty he began giving private lessons in Jena, where he found the patronage of Sagittarius, a professor of History at the University. In 1692 he was appointed to the chair of Latin and Greek at the grammar school in Coburg. In Halle, in the following year, he met August Hermann Francke the theologian and Christian Thomasius, two figures who were to have a strong influence on his ideas and his academic career. Francke, the friend and follower of Spener and founder of the *collegia pietatis*, exercised a strong fascination over the young Buddeus, who, although never officially joining the Pietists, took part in several battles on their side and was considered, especially by his opponents, to be a Pietist. His friendship with Ch. Thomasius was no less important: because of his polemical attitude towards official academic culture Buddeus had left Leipzig at that time and had found in Halle the protection of the Elector of Brandenburg, the future Frederick I of Prussia. When the new Prussian University of Halle was founded in 1694 around the chair of Jurisprudence held by Thomasius, Buddeus was appointed to teach moral philosophy, a post that he held until 1705 and which, it seems, attracted many students from all social classes.[12]

[12]Cf. the "Elogium J. Francisci Buddei", which appeared in the *Acta Eruditorum* (1731, pp. 245–248), the famous Leipzig review of which for thirty years Buddeus was an *insignis pars*: "You could have seen 500 young men coming out of his lectures, and not only those of humble background, but the flower of Germany, among whom, after the princes themselves, were many from the most noble families or those renowned because of the high rank of their parents" (p. 246). This is confirmed by the *Bibliothèque Germanique*, which also mentions his teaching: "Son auditoire étoit toujours rempli, souvent même jusqu'à foule, et l'empressement avec lequel on le suivoit étoit un juste hommage dû à son erudition, à sa capacité, à sa piété et à sa vertu. Il étoit clair et methodique.

In 1705 the University of Jena offered Buddeus a chair of theology, which he had aspired to for years, and which he accepted despite last-minute intervention by the King of Prussia himself, who was setting up a extraordinary chair of Theology for him at Halle.

He became an authority in the field of theological studies, in which he sought to act as a mediator between the demands for renewal put forward by the Pietists, which mainly concerned the inner aspect of religious piety, and the strict defence of orthodoxy on a doctrinal level. His closeness to Pietism is clear in his subordination of the speculative and dogmatic aspect of faith to its practical aspect: for Buddeus theological *themata*, like juridical *themata*, had a predominantly practical interest and should be expressed in a life of true piety. In spite of his conciliatory and tolerant attitude,[13] he was at the centre of many controversies: with Leibniz over the question of the origin of evil, following the publication of the *Théodicée*;[14] with Thomasius himself in the later years of his life over the relationship between moral theology and natural law; and with Christian Wolff, who was openly accused of atheism in the *Bedenken über die Wolffianische Philosophie*, published in 1724 without his knowledge by the Pietists, who made use of Buddeus' prestige to persuade the authorities of the danger of Wolffism.

The polemic with Wolff, who was forced to go into exile just at this time, damaged the memory of Buddeus, who died in 1729, at a period when approval of Wolff's person and ideas was beginning to spread. Buddeus on the other hand was quickly forgotten and was subsequently studied almost exclusively for the role that he had taken in this controversy. In reality, Buddeus's activity in the field of theology and philosophy, which had already been clearly defined before the appearance of Wolff's writings, transcended the boundaries of a clash between Wolffian rationalism and the anti-philosophical arguments of Pietism.[15] Buddeus' teaching was connected that of Ch. Thomasius, from whom he took his eclectic inspiration and

---

C'est ce que prouvent ce grand nombre d'ouvrages qu'il a publiés. Ennemi du fatras scholastique, il n'en parloit qu'autant qu'il le falloit pour faire entendre à ses disciples certains termes qu'on ne sauroit ignorer" (BG, Vol. XXII [1731], p. 123).

[13]Brucker spoke of *placidissima Buddei anima* and of his surprise at the harshness of Thomasius' attacks on him (Brucker, V, p. 532). The "Elogium", cited above, also emphasizes this aspect of his character: "From the fifth year of the present century (1705), after he had first obtained a doctorate at Halle, it seems that by a fortunate destiny propitious not only for the university but also for the whole church, he was granted to our time, so that in the great conflicts that like tempests tossed the Church about, his moderation and wisdom could help him to avoid confusion and, in the storm of dispute, not to lose sight of the truth" (AE, 1731, pp. 246–247).

[14]Cf. Leibniz' "Epistola" written to Buddeus in response to a *Dissertatio de origine mali* that the latter had written: "Leibnizius ad Buddeum, in disputationem de origine mali" (April 1712), in *Annales Academiae Juliae* (Brunswick, 1722), repr. in *Bibliotheca historico-philologico-theologica* (Bremen, 1725), Vol. VIII, No. 1, pp. 77–78. Cf. F. Ravier, *Biographie des oeuvres de Leibniz* (Paris, 1937), p. 203.

[15]Cf. Wundt, pp. 63–64, 242–243. Zambelli explains the difference in method between the two philosophers: "Buddeus's inventive criterion, which proceeds essentially *a posteriori* selecting reliable teachings from the most varied systems, cannot be reconciled with the deductivistic and systematic claims that betray Spinozist sympathies in Wolff". But common to both of them was the

anti-Aristotelian polemic, his criticism of the deductive method and the importance assigned to experience. Thus, although Buddeus opposed Wolff, he represented not a denial of the *Aufklärung* but rather its eclectic and empiricist tendency, strongly imbued with theological motivation and caution, which dominated the German universities in the early decades of the century and existed alongside the evolution of the German Enlightenment even in the period of Wolffian supremacy.

5.5.2. The main aspect of Buddeus's work is its scholarly character and hence the use of Latin, in the very years when Thomasius was progressively abandoning it in favour of German, even in his didactic work. His writings on philosophical, legal and historico-philosophical subjects date back to his time at Halle, while his works on theology and Church history belong to the period after 1705.

The philosophy course, entitled *Philosophia eclectica*, comprises three volumes: *Elementa philosophiae practicae* (1697); *Elementa philosophiae instrumentalis* (1703); *Elementa philosophiae theoreticae* (1703), published in Halle and reprinted many times: 25 editions up to 1727; facs. repr., ed. W. Sparn (Hildesheim and New York, 2004–2006). Evidence of the subsequent fate of this work and its influence in the world of academic culture – "the most widely circulated system before Wolff, in which the early Enlightenment found its most robust philosophical expression" (Wundt, p. 66) – are the summaries, translations, and commentaries on it. The whole system was translated into German by M. Musig, with the title *Licht der Weisheit* in two volumes (1709–1711), with a preface by Buddeus. J.J. Lehmann published the *Observationes, in quibus celeberrimi philosophi ac theologi J.F. Buddei "Institutiones philosophiae eclecticae" illustrantur* (Leipzig, 1724). J.G. Feuerlinus edited a new edition of the Logic: *Medicina intellectus, sive logica e venerandi Buddei logica suisque in eam praelectionibus academicis in theses breves redacta* (1715), and the famous Andreas Rüdiger re-introduced the subject of practical philosophy: *Klugheit zu leben und zu herrschen nach dem Sinn und Lehr-Art eines wahrhafftig hochgelahrten Mannes* (Leipzig, 1722). The aim was to make Buddeus's work as simple and didactically effective as possible by publishing mnemonic tables: J.F. Buddeus, *Elementa philosophiae instrumentalis, theoreticae et practicae in tabulas synopticas redacta*, edere voluit I. Fr. Schopperlinus (Leipzig and Frankfurt, 1727), and in the following year J.J. Schatz published other *Tabulae synopticae philosophiae Buddei eclecticae in usum studiosae iuventutis adornatae* (Büdingen, 1728).

The *Elementa philosophiae instrumentalis* was introduced by a *Historiae philosophicae succincta delineatio* (pp. 1–98 of the Halle edition) which, supplemented with "Observationes", was to be published under the editorship of Johann

---

tendency to give theological discourse a rational foundation: "Although [Buddeus's] major contribution to the debate of 1723 was to emphasize Wolff's dependence on Leibniz, which irritated the former, historians of evangelical theology have been able to detect a 'notable parallel' between Buddeus ('a theologian who regarded himself as orthodox') and Leibniz and Wolff. This parallel consists of their common appeal to 'sound reason' against atheism, and in their definition of a theistic vision of the world that was clear and defined and capable of laying the foundations of religion" (Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica di A. Genovesi*, pp. 392 and 387).

Georg Walch under the title *Compendium historiae philosophiae observationibus illustratum* (Halle: Tipis et impensis Orphanotrophii, 1731). The "Observationes" on the other parts of instrumental philosophy were published a year later by Walch himself. The history of philosophy represents the best preparatory course for eclecticism, because it gives a preliminary understanding of philosophical problems and develops the faculty of judgement and choice between the various doctrines. "Instrumental" philosophy is then divided into four parts: (i) logic strictly speaking (*de ratione inveniendi verum*) in which Buddeus took up Locke's ideas on the question of the division and origin of ideas, and went back to Descartes's idea of evidence as the only criterion of truth; (ii) hermeneutics, or the art of extracting the true sense from the writings of others; (iii) *prudentia docendi*, or the art of communicating the truth; (iv) *metaphysica*, or the science of being in general, and therefore the *notitia terminorum philosophicorum*. "Theoretical" philosophy, on the other hand, is philosophy *realis*, which deals with *res ipsae*, and it uses the empirical method, moving from the known to the unknown; it includes physics and theology, the doctrines of created things and of their creator. Practical philosophy, in which the ideas of Grotius, Pufendorf, and Thomasius are repeated, is concerned with the actions of men and is divided into ethics, jurisprudence, and politics.

Among Buddeus' early writings on "practical" philosophy there is a commentary on Tacitus: *Observationes politicae in C. Cornelii Taciti annales lib. I* (Halle, 1694–1695). An important collection of essays on moral, legal, and political subjects is entitled *Selecta juris naturae et gentium* (Halle, 1704, 1712^2); it begins with a "Historia juris naturalis aucta et ad hanc aetatem usque continuata" (pp. 1–91), which repeats the "Historia juris naturalis" added to the *Institutiones juris naturae et gentium* of Ph. R. Vitriarius, published in 1692 (in the Lausanne edition of 1744, pp. 369–382). The updated edition presents a complete summary of the theories on the law of nature from Plato to Ch. Thomasius. The preface includes a formulation of a methodical rule whose effectiveness Buddeus had been able to check in his study of the Stoics: it is necessary to understand every philosophical statement or dogma by referring back to the system of the school concerned. Two very topical essays form part of this collection: (i) "Exercitatio juris naturalis de pietate philosophica seu religione naturali" (pp. 193–267), in which the limits of philosophy in theological discussion are established and the inevitability of revelation is emphasized (in fact, reason is able to demonstrate the existence of God but is not adequate for the clarification of other fundamental truths, such as the immortality of the soul); and (ii) "Exercitatio juris naturalis de cultura ingenii", republished after more than half a century: *Exercitatio de cultura ingenii, ubi de necessitate, modis ac rationibus ingenii animique excolendi ac de fine et utilitate disciplinarum saluberrima praecepta traduntur* (The Hague, 1765). The subjects of this work – the purpose of culture, the different types of mind and its subjective and historical conditions – were to be taken up again by Heumann in the chapter on "philosophical acumen" in his *Acta philosophorum*. On the same subject: *Philosophischer Discours von dem Unterschied der Welt- und Schulgelahrtheit* (Halle, 1709); *Moralischer Discours von dem Elend und Mängeln der Gelehrte, derselben Ursachen und Mitteln, wie sie*

davon können befreiet werden (Halle, 1711); *De bonarum litterarum decremento nostra aetate non temere metuendo* (Jena, 1714).

Buddeus's initial studies on the history of philosophy date back to the years when he was teaching at Halle. His research in this field produced two collections of essays: i) *Sapientia veterum, hoc est, Dicta illustriora septem Graeciae sapientum dissertationibus aliquot academicis explicata* (Halle, 1699), eight brief dissertations that present and comment on the opinions of each of the Seven Wise Men (the fifth dissertation is a comparison between the laws of Solon and the Mosaic laws); and ii) *Analecta historiae philosophicae* (Halle, 1706; 1724^2, facs. repr. Hildesheim and New York, 2006), eleven dissertations, again mostly on Greek philosophy ("Philosophus fabularum amator", "De superstitioso mortuorum apud Chinenses cultu", "De scepticismo morali", "De peregrinationibus Pythagorae", "De 'Katharsei' pythagoreo-platonica", "De 'aschései' philosophica"...). The most important dissertations are on Stoicism and Spinozism: the *Exercitationes de erroribus Stoicorum in philosophia morali* I–IV (Halle, 1695–1686) offers a demystification of stoic morality seen in its irreconcilability with Christianity; and the *De spinozismo ante Spinozam* (Halle, 1701) identifies Spinozism with the affirmation of the oneness of substance and explains the history of this principle, beginning with the Greeks, and finds it clearly formulated for the first time among the representatives of the Eleatic school.

After producing so many specialist works, Buddeus felt the need to tackle the history of philosophy in a systematic and complete way, with a series of works each examining one school of philosophy. The project was announced in the preface to the *Introductio ad historiam philosophiae Ebraeorum* (Halle, 1702, republished in 1720; facs. repr. Hildesheim and New York, 2004), which was to serve as a model for subsequent studies. The plan of the work, even though it went no further than this first essay, displays some characteristics that were to remain constant in Buddeus's historiography. He saw the history of philosophy as the history of the philosophical schools, and gave more space to the content of their teachings than to bibliographical details. Hebrew philosophy has the features of a school, like Platonism and Aristotelianism, but it is sharply differentiated from all the other schools; it is wisdom of divine origin and in this it is superior to pagan philosophy, which is purely human wisdom: "What is special and characteristic in the philosophy of the Hebrews is that it leads us to knowledge of those things that were sought for in vain from the philosophers of the other peoples" ("Praefatio", p. 7). The *Dissertatio de haeresi Valentiniana* is published as an appendix to the *Introductio ad historiam philosophiae Ebraeorum*; in it Buddeus shows the corruption of the wisdom originally revealed, which was on the contrary expressed in a pure form in the ancient Cabbala. Defence of the Cabbala was one of Buddeus's constant preoccupations, particularly during his time at Halle; this can be seen in various articles written for the journal "Observationes selectae ad rem litterariam spectantes", 11 Vols., Halle 1700–1705. Under Buddeus's editorship of the journal he sought contributions from some of the most notable personalities of the German academic world (Thomasius, Stahl, Struve, Gundling, Reimmann). The "Observatio

prima" ("Origines philosophiae mysticae, sive Cabbalae Ebraeorum brevis delineation", OS, I, pp. 1–25) declares that Cabbalistic teachings are perfectly in harmony with Christianity: "The main points of Christian teaching of the governance of the Kingdom of Heaven are derived from the dogma of the Cabbala" (§ XI); "it has been shown that the Lord's Prayer contains briefly the Cabbalistic teachings of the ten Sephirot" (§ XIII). Buddeus also wrote a "Defensio Cabbalae Ebraeorum contra auctores quosdam modernos" [viz. Thomas Burnet and Johann Georg Wachterus], OS, I, pp. 198–220.

After the Hebrews, it was the Stoics who were of greatest interest to Buddeus as a historian of philosophy. He wrote a monograph on them too: *Introductio ad philosophiam Stoicam ex mente sententiaque M. Aurelii Antonini Imperatoris*, a preface to the translation of the work of Marcus Aurelius (Leipzig, 1729). The author used Marcus Aurelius as a starting point for a systematic treatment of the philosophy of the Stoic school, given the agreement of all its adherents on the main points of its teaching; he repeated the criticisms of the Stoics, especially over their concepts of God and Providence, but allowed a rehabilitation of some of their opinions which when considered in themselves, unconnected to the system, seemed to follow the principles of Christian morality.

The area of his theological writings is certainly the most extensive. Following the Pietist point of view, Buddeus made a clear distinction between theology and philosophy ("the light of reason is completely different from the light of revelation"); the former has a dogmatic foundation, the latter a rational one. Therefore, the theological method will be dogmatically critical and exegetic, unlike the eclectic critical and rational method that is appropriate to philosophy: *Institutiones theologiae moralis* (Leipzig, 1711; 1727^2, facs. repr. Hildesheim and New York, 2007); *Historia ecclesiastica Veteris Testamenti ab urbe condita usque ad Christum natum*, 2 Vols. (Halle, 1715–1718); *Theses theologicae de atheismo et superstitione* (Jena, 1717); *Institutiones theologiae dogmaticae* (Leipzig, 1723; facs. repr., ed. F. Nüssel, Hildesheim and New York, 1999); *Isagoge historico-theologica ad theologiam universam singulasque eius partes* (Leipzig, 1727; 1730^2, facs. repr., ed. L. Hell, Hildesheim and New York, 1999); *Ecclesia apostolica sive de statu ecclesiae christianae sub Apostolis* (Jena, 1729); *Compendium antiquitatum ecclesiasticarum ex scriptoribus apologeticis eorumdemque commentatoribus compositum* (Leipzig, 1733); another edn: *Buddeus redivivus, oder: Darstellung der kirchlichen Alterthümer der drei ersten christlichen Jahrhunderte* (Stolberg a/H. and Leipzig, 1873). For theology too, a suitable historical training is indispensable, namely *historia litteraria theologica* which comprises the history of the Church in the first place, but also the other historical disciplines, among them the history of philosophy. This is demonstrated clearly in what is perhaps Buddeus's most well-known theological work, the *Theses de atheismo*, of which there was also a German translation (*Lehrsätze von der Atheisterey und dem Aberglauben*, Jena, 1717), and a French edition (*Traité de l'athéisme et de la superstition*, Amsterdam, 1740). The first chapter contains a general history of philosophy compiled according to the point of view of atheism and Spinozism (cf. para 5.5.5).

The majority of his dissertations and academic debates on theological subjects are collected in *Parerga historico-theologica* (Halle, 1703); *Dissertationum*

theologicarum syntagma (Jena, 1715); *Meditationes sacrae, antea sigillatim, nunc vero coniunctim editae* (Jena, 1725); *Miscellanea sacra sive dissertationum aliarumque commentationum ad theologiam, historiam ecclesiasticam et recentiores controversias spectantium*, 3 Vols. (Jena, 1727). Buddeus often took part in denominational controversies, particularly in defence of the Pietists and against the Catholics on the occasion of the Papal Bull *Unigenitus* which condemned the Jansenists: *Wahrhafftige und gründliche historische Erzehlung alles dessen, was zwischen denen heute zu Tage so gennandten Pietisten geschehen und vorgegangen ist* (Jena, 1710); *Comm. hist.-theol. de Pelagianesimo in ecclesia Romana per bullam anti-Quesnellianam hodie triumphante* (Jena, 1714); *Defensio doctrinae orthodoxae de omnibus concedenda scripturae sacrae lectione, occasione bullae anti-Quesnellianae* (Jena, 1715); *De origine et potestate episcoporum contra Henr. Dodwellum* (Jena, 1715); *Epistola de nonnullis ad quorundam ecclesiae evangelicae in Silesia ministrorum innocentiam vindicandam spectantibus* (Halle, 1723); *Historische und theologische Einleitung in die vornehmsten Religions-Streitigkeiten* (Jena, 1724); *De fallibili pontificis Romani infallibilitate* (Jena, 1725); *De conciliis Lateranensibus rei christianae noxiis* (Jena, 1725).

Buddeus worked untiringly to promote German culture, opening it up to the most lively topics in European culture at that time. Despite his criticisms of Bayle in the field of theology, he admired his historical method and sought to imitate it, planning a great lexicon (*Allgemeines historische Lexicon*, 2 Vols., Leipzig, 1709, with the addition of supplements in 1714; 2nd ed. in 4 Vols., Leipzig, 1722), which was to be the German equivalent of the *Dictionnaire historique et critique*. He also produced a large number of new editions of texts on various subjects, many by foreign authors: A. Comenius, *Historia fratrum Bohemorum [. . .] Cum praef. Buddei De instauranda disciplina ecclesiastica* (Halle, 1702); G.F. Pico della Mirandola, *De studio divinae et humanae philosophiae libri duo*. Edidit praefationemque praemisit J.F. Buddeus (Halle, 1702); *Logica sive Ars cogitandi* (Halle, 1703), translation of the *Art de penser* of Port Royal, which Buddeus prefaced with a brief outline of the history of logic ("De fatis studii logici"); S. Glass, *Philologia sacra. Accedit praef. Buddei* (1713); J.G. Olearius, *Bibliotheca scriptorum ecclesiasticorum* (Jena, 1711); A. Grischow, *Introductio in philologiam generalem. Accedit protheoria J.F. Buddei* (Jena, 1715); J.M. Gesner, *Institutiones rei scholasticae. Accedit praef. Buddei* (Jena, 1715); *Collectio nova epistolarum M. Lutheri, occasione iubilaei evangelici in lucem data: cum diss. prael. de aucta insigniter per recentissimas quasdam epistolarum collectiones re litteraria et ecclesiastica, nec non nova praef. apologetica J.F. Buddei* (Halle, 1717); T.L. Mosheim, *Vindiciae antiquae Christianorum disciplinae adversus [. . .] J. Tolandi Nazarenum. Praef. qua atheismo calumnia a S. Scriptura depellitur, praemisit J.F. Buddeus* (Hamburg, 1722); J. Bingham, *Origines sive antiquitates ecclesiasticae. Cum praef. Buddei* (1724).

5.5.3. Although Buddeus was not involved specifically in methodological questions, his writings contributed towards the creation of a renewed interest in the history of philosophy, to such an extent that most of the German historians of the first half of the eighteenth century recognised him as their master and inspiration. The writing of history was not something detached from the rest of his literary work, but it

provided the necessary groundwork and supplemented his theological and philosophical research. The usefulness of the history of philosophy was an often-repeated subject, from the *Introductio ad historiam philosophiae Ebraeorum* onwards in which, referring to the need for further study of this part of *Historia litteraria*, he expressed the wish that his book would find not only a friendly welcome but also imitators and successors: "The need for this enterprise and its usefulness seemed to me of such great importance that [. . .]. I decided to encourage others, by my example, to produce something more accurate and more precise" ("Praefatio", p. 3).

The most immediate demands came from links with theology and the history of the Church: "It seemed to me that I had reasons which were not to be taken lightly, to engage in my activity in this particular type of study. To mention only one: ever since my youth I had reckoned that the history of the Church was worthy of occupying the mind of a man at any age, and as I soon weighed up and meditated on everything, I found that it [i.e. the history of the Church] is linked very closely to the history of philosophy, so that we should consider that anyone who wishes to excel in the one without having first even studied and touched on the other has completely wasted his time" (*Introd. ad Hist. phil. Ebr.*, "Praefatio", p. 2). Discussions of the relationship between reason and faith and philosophy and theology, which were very topical in Germany at that time as a result of Bayle's ideas and because of the anti-scholastic polemic of Pietism, had aroused interest in treating the history of the Church and the history of philosophy in parallel. The history of philosophy forms a fundamental chapter in the history of the Church;[16] not only does it make it possible to understand the origins of heresy and the causes of godlessness, but at the same time it offers the means of fighting against the enemies of the Church and religion. This is the reason for the centrality of the theme of atheism in the history of the Church: it functions as a litmus test for the value and limits of every philosophical system. This apologetic function demands a greater attention to contents and directs the historian's efforts towards a precise account of philosophical teachings; the work of the critics, "who bring to light rituals and so-called ecclesiastical antiquities or do research into chronology or correct the writings of the Church Fathers", should be accompanied by the work of the historians, "who investigate the true teachings of the Ancients and show how the schools of the philosophers derived from them" (*Intr. ad. hist. phil. Ebr.*, "Praefatio", p. 3).

Interest in both the contents and the system is emphasized by the links between the history of philosophy and philosophy itself. Buddeus's academic courses in philosophy were preceded, in the manner of Ch. Thomasius, by a *Historiae philosophicae succincta delineatio*, which represented young students' first encounter with philosophical questions: "I consider that the minds of the young can be properly prepared to enter these mysteries only by a knowledge of history. In fact, the

[16]Thus the history of philosophy is frequently referred to in theological works: "If necessary it could be proved, with very many examples, that numerous heresies have arisen from the teachings of the philosophers, or have received power and encouragement from them. The history of philosophy is no less useful in illustrating the writings of the [Church] Fathers, given that they often refer to the principles and opinions of the ancient philosophers" (*Isagoge ad theologiam*, I, p. 195).

contents of history are easily absorbed, and it is used because it is agreeable, so that little by little the mind is led to more difficult and serious things" (*Elementa phil. instrumentalis*, Halle 1714, "Lectori benevolo"). The need for a historical introduction was connected with the method and the very nature of philosophy, which for Buddeus consisted of eclecticism; the principal purpose of studying history was to show the defects of school philosophy and the delusion of those who were satisfied to accept the truth already codified by the philosophers of the past, "among whom, although they are numerous, not one can be found in whose camp truth always serves, so the task of the true philosopher is not to swear on the words of others but to examine everything in order to preserve the best" (*Compendium hist. philosophiae*, p. 34).

The history of philosophy demonstrates the efforts made in every period to bring about a freer and more independent form of philosophical research. This was soon frustrated however by the pride of the heads of the schools, and by the sectarianism of their followers, which led to the setting up of schools in which the search for truth dried up. In effect, the founders of the philosophical schools were originally eclectic philosophers, but their disciples began to swear on the teachings of their master, leading to the dogmatic restriction of the system (*Compendium*, pp. 534–535). Thus the history of philosophy had up to that point been the history of philosophical schools arguing with one another in defence of their dogmas. Buddeus contrasted this deformed *ratio philosophandi* with the freedom to make philosophy, in other words eclecticism. Eclecticism is defined at the end of the *Compendium* as the result, and at the same time the point of reference, of the history of philosophy that he has just recounted: "The person worthy of the title of eclectic philosopher is he who forms accurate principles by means of reflection on reality, on the basis of which he then chooses from among opinions he has read in the books of others those that conform with these principles, while rejecting those that do not conform with them" (*Compendium*, p. 537).

The eclectic differs from the syncretist who renounces his personal search for truth in order to reconcile the various theories; the eclectic philosopher, on the other hand, takes as his point of reference the search for reality (*ex rerum ipsarum contemplatione*). This is defined and realized, however, by means of two converging paths: the first consists of experience and direct observation of phenomena (*per experientiam et observationem rerum*), the second is given by historical information and study (*per lectionem scriptorum*). This second aspect of research is neither accessory nor secondary, but is something that cannot be eliminated: "It cannot be denied that the life of man is circumscribed by limits so restricted that one person is not able to observe all the things he needs to know" (*Elem. phil. instr*., p. 159). However, historical knowledge must always be accompanied by reflection (*meditatio*) and personal inquiry into the nature of things, taking care that the concepts of the mind "should be in conformity with nature" (*Elem. phil. instr.*, p. 62).

The eclectic philosopher introduces a fundamental theoretical emphasis into the history of philosophy, transforming its nature and methods. First of all, there is an awareness that the history of philosophy is a distinct genre of history which has philosophy as its object; philosophy, as defined in the first chapter of the *Compendium*,

serves as a guide and direction to historical research itself: "*Philosophia* is, literally, love or study of wisdom; on the basis of its contents, it is knowledge of things both divine and human, in as much as they can preserve the true happiness of men" (*Compendium*, p. 4). The two characteristics that distinguish it from every other type of knowledge are *recta ratio*, that is the correct use of the rational faculty, and the usefulness of its results which do not lead to mere verbal definitions. Despite the lack of precision in these characteristics, Buddeus believed that they provided him with a criterion by which "those things unworthy of the title of philosopher are put aside and those that deserve it are not excluded" (*Compendium*, p. 5). This opened the way therefore for the tendency, later to be fully acknowledged by Heumann, to restrict the field of *historia philosophica* to the category of works with a specifically philosophical form, while for Jonsius on the other hand it covered almost the entire area of *historia litteraria*.

A definition of the history of philosophy which is richer from a methodological point of view emerges from the outline of a polyhistorical framework included in a theological work, the *Isagoge ad theologiam universam*. Among the possible ways of writing *historia litteraria*, Buddeus listed *historia litteratorum* (which describes the lives of illustrious men), *historia librorum* (which gives information on the various branches of learning), and *historia artium et scientiarum*, which is more important than the other two "in its usefulness and value", because it shows, in relation to each branch of knowledge, "the origin, progress, fate, growth, and decline, the promoters and denigrators, the schools with their hypotheses and foundations, and other things of that kind able to throw the greatest light on their own teachings and to expand them more precisely" (*Isagoge ad theologiam*, Leipzig, 1730, I, p. 193). The history of philosophy belongs to the last of the three genres of history, which leads us to "the very heart of literary history"; to this end, even the method must be appropriate, not only in order to emphasize examples of famous men or learned discoveries of ancient texts, but also in order to produce a reliable reconstruction of the teachings and systems that have followed on from one other in the course of history and to give a precise account of contemporary debate. The history of philosophy is not the history of philosophers, nor is it a bare knowledge of their works, but it is the history of the schools of philosophy and their systems.

The history that Buddeus describes is neither uncommitted nor neutral. The historian is personally involved in his work, which is never pure erudition – research dedicated to clarifying a past era by now completely outdated and incapable of communicating anything; rather, it demands vigilance and sharpness of judgement, "so that anyone may learn what should be imitated and every other thing that should once again be avoided. In this way, as is right, I take the side of the historian, and at the same time, acting otherwise, I point out, to those who wish to learn, the path to follow, and I reveal the precipices into which some mortals fall and which we should avoid with the greatest care" (*Isagoge ad theologiam*, "Praefatio"). The historical reconstruction of philosophical systems and the examination of the value of the truth and errors contained in them form the two moments, independent of each other but equally necessary, of historical research. Only in this way can the history

of philosophy attain the purposes for which, according to Buddeus, it should be studied, showing itself to be an indispensable tool for both theology and philosophy, which both find in it grounds for a deeper study of their respective positions and an opportunity for making useful comparisons.

5.5.4. *Compendium Historiae philosophiae*

5.5.4.1. *The Compendium* was published posthumously with a preface by J.G. Walch ("Lectori benevolo S.") explaining what had happened to Buddeus's manuals of philosophy and the novelty of his historiographical method which aimed to give an account of the philosophical systems. The account, divided into six chapters, is similar to the "Historiae philosophicae succincta delineatio" printed as a preface to the first volume of the *Institutiones philosophiae eclecticae*. There are numerous lengthy notes which, as they were written over a long period of time (1703–1729), often give interpretations that differ from the unchanged basic text. The first chapter ("De philosophia generatim", pp. 3–23) is an introduction: it offers a definition of philosophy and the possible ways to approach it (sceptical, dogmatic, sectarian, eclectic). Three chapters are devoted to the three areas (Hebrews, Barbarians, and Greeks) into which ancient philosophy was traditionally divided: "De philosophia Ebraeorum" (pp. 24–37); "De philosophia Gentilium, speciatim barbarica" (pp. 37–106); and "De philosophia Graecanica" (pp. 106–325). The brief chapter on the Middle Ages ("De philosophia Medii Aevi", pp. 325–363) touches on Roman thought in the Imperial age, and dwells at greater length on Latin Scholasticism. The final chapter, second richest in *observationes* after that on the Greeks, explains modern thought ("De philosophia recentiori", pp. 363–542), with a section on the Chinese. The work concludes with two particularly well-compiled indices which are large in relation to the length of the book: "Index auctorum" (20 pages) and "Index rerum praecipuarum" (26 pages).

5.5.4.2. For Buddeus the history of philosophy was the history of the schools that followed on from one another over the centuries; they were ancient or modern, with a *media philosophia* that flowered between them: "Therefore the schools of philosophers are either 'ancient' or 'modern'; however, a kind of *media philosophia* can be added to them" (p. 24). Ancient philosophy is then divided into Hebrew and pagan; the former originated with Adam and continued in an uninterrupted sequence of corruption and recovery up to the modern version of the Cabbalisic system. Pagan philosophy "can be divided into Barbarian and Greek" on the basis of language: "As in the past the peoples who used a language different from Greek, were called Barbarians by the Greeks, so we here give the name 'Barbaric' to the philosophy that was opposed to the philosophy of the Greeks" (p. 39). The "Barbarian" peoples are divided according to their geographical areas: Asia (Chaldeans, Persians, Phoenicians, Sabaeans, and Indians), Africa (Egyptians), and Europe (Thracians, Druids, and Celts). The link between Barbarian and Greek thought is represented by Pythagoreanism, which Buddeus treated in the chapter on Barbarian philosophy, though with some hesitation: "Before we embark on Greek philosophy, we need to say something about Pythagorean philosophy, which you could connect, as some

do, with Barbarian philosophy, and as others do, with Greek philosophy; it seems to be the same thing" (p. 90).

Greek philosophy has three parts. In the beginning poetic wisdom appeared: "In ancient times it was very usual to collect teachings together and to set them out in verse" (p. 108). Then a more rigorous way of thought developed, seeking the causes of phenomena without recourse to allegories. This led to two tendencies: the first, comprising the Ionics, originated with Thales, and had a second founder in Socrates; the Cyrenaics, the school of Elis, the Megarians, the Academics, the Cynics, and through them the Peripatetics and the Stoics, descend directly from the Socratic school. The second line of development of Greek philosophy is represented by Eleatism, which began with Xenophanes and Parmenides and experienced a profound internal transformation with the introduction of atomism by Leucippus: "Leucippus of Elea, famous as the inventor of atoms, was, long before that, one who attend Zeno's teaching" (p. 385). Epicureanism was connected with the tradition of the Eleatic school: "he [Epicurus] was the great restorer of the school of Democritus" (p. 277).

Media philosophia comprised both the Roman and the Mediaeval periods. At first the Romans were eclectic (Cicero) then they became linked to one of the Greek schools, which were reduced to four by an edict issued by Antoninus Pius: Platonism, Stoicism, Epicureanism, and Aristotelianism. When the Empire fell, nearly all philosophy disappeared too: "Finally, the fall of the Western Empire was followed by terrible barbarity and the uncivilized decline of learning, so that philosophy itself was almost forced into oblivion" (p. 336). It was taken up again by the Arabs, who handed it back to the Latins in the form of Aristotelian philosophy: "When the Saracens, an Arab people, had occupied a large part of Africa, and eventually crossed over into Spain, they brought Arabic Aristotelian philosophy into Europe and this gave rise to Scholastic philosophy" (p. 344).

Buddeus's scheme setting out modern thought, which was to be the basis of Brucker's treatise, is of more interest than his division into periods of ancient and mediaeval philosophy, based on Vossius and Tribbechow respectively. The modern era is characterized by the reform of philosophy in opposition to Scholasticism: "With the rebirth of sound learning, philosophy too began to take on a completely different aspect, since learned men vied with each other to destroy the yoke of Scholastic philosophy, but not all took the same path" (p. 365). In fact, they followed different paths: some restricted themselves to criticising Scholasticism without suggesting an alternative view of philosophy (Vives, Valla, Nizolio); others restored the ancient Greek schools such as Platonism (Bessarion, Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, Ermolao Barbaro), Pythagoreanism (Reuchlin, Henry More), Epicureanism (Gassendi, Walter Charleton, Hobbes), Stoicism (Lipsius, Kaspar Schoppe), and Aristotelianism (Cesalpino, Cremonini, Piccolomini, Zabarella, Melanchthon, Conringius), or they extracted the true philosophy from Scripture (Comenius, Burnet, Dickinson). Finally others, more praiseworthy, reformed philosophy by proposing new systems (the *novatores* of the whole of philosophy: Cardano,

Bacon, Campanella, Descartes). The last to be described in the context of modern philosophy are the Chinese.[17]

The division into periods is not analysed in any particular detail; however, Buddeus realized that it was difficult to present such complex material in a framework as consistent as possible while explaining the composition and order of the chapters more clearly. The chronological criterion is not the determining factor even in the most general division into three periods, but rather the need to expound things in an orderly way to make memorization easier. Thus, as we have already seen, Buddeus adds to the traditional division between ancient and modern philosophy a *media philosophia* to cover the intermediate period which is then made to coincide with Scholastic thought, leaving the philosophy of the Roman era completely in the shade.

Within the three major periods, the chronological division is mainly parallel; because of this there is no comprehensive picture of all the systems flourishing at a certain moment in history, but the origin, growth, spread, and decline of each is described separately. After establishing the division of the Greek schools into Ionics and Eleatics, Buddeus gives an account first of Thales, Socrates, and the schools deriving from them, up to the Stoics, and then returns to Xenophanes and Parmenides, the founders of Eleatism. The unifying element is the idea of the partial, biased nature of the points of view reached by the various historical philosophies, and the opinion that these philosophies appeared mostly as schools, closed systems which as such were to be rejected and recovered if at all for eclectic use.

Despite the division into periods and the further divisions, the philosophical systems are presented side by side, in direct relation to the present which, as we have seen, is represented by eclectic philosophy. The need for a dialogue with the philosophers of the past leads to a historical reconstruction in which, leaving aside the idea of temporal difference and historical evolution, historical systems are, so to speak, reviewed and catalogued according to criteria of classification that could be transferred to natural history without calling for any change of perspective. The temporal dimension is only one of the elements, together with geography and others concerning logical order, used to reach the fullest clarification of the whole picture. Given the fact that the *Compendium* was to be used in teaching, the pedagogic criterion prevails over all the others.

5.5.4.3. The ancient period is clearly divided into Hebrew and pagan philosophy. The philosophy of the Jews, being of divine origin, has a history completely

[17] The presence of the Chinese among the "more recent" philosophers was justified by the topical interest in their ideas resulting from the appearance of several works published on the basis of information from missionaries who proposed to make Chinese civilization known in Europe, works such as *Confucius Sinarum philosophus, sive scientia Sinensis latine exposita*, eds. P. Intorcetta, C. Herdtrich, F. Rougemont and Ph. Couplet (Paris, 1687), but above all following the appreciation expressed by Leibniz and Wolff. Because of this, the Spinozism that Buddeus found in Confucianism ended up by implicating Wolffian philosophy. On this subject, cf. Garin, "Compendi di storia della filosofia", pp. 90–91.

independent of the philosophy of the other peoples. Buddeus was well aware of the difference between our concept of philosophy and that of the ancient Hebrews, even before Heumann, in his *Acta philosophorum*, had described the philosophy of the Patriarchs and put it into the category of "simple and empirical wisdom": "It is certainly not possible to judge the wisdom of Adam by the method of philosophizing that prevails today. The same should be borne in mind for the philosophy of the other Patriarchs". However, he gave Moses the title of "eminent philosopher" for having left to us "a very fine document of moral and social teaching, and particularly of natural philosophy" (pp. 25 and 28).

According to Buddeus, the main nucleus of Hebrew philosophy consisted of the Cabbalistic teachings, described at length in the *Introductio ad historiam philosophiae Ebraeorum*, and defended, in opposition to Burnet, in the "Observationes selectae". However, not all of the Cabbala was positive: Buddeus made a distinction between *Cabbala vetus* and *Cabbala recentior*. The former was rooted directly in the Holy Scripture: "It is contained in Holy Scripture, especially in the books of Moses", and reveals many truths drawn from original revealed wisdom, such as the Trinity and the creation of the world, while the second was contaminated by its contact with Graeco-pagan speculation and is in certain ways very close to Spinozism: "they too explained the origin of all things by means of emanation from the first cause" (pp. 35–36).[18]

A fundamental moral and social purpose runs through the philosophy of the Barbarians, and for that reason it is preferable to that of the Greeks "which opened up the way to vain speculations" (p. 89). Furthermore, compared with the Greeks, it had a more direct connection with the primitive popular wisdom, which is preserved

[18] In his opinion on the Cabbala Buddeus was close to the position of the Cambridge Platonists R. Cudworth and H. More; they were the reason for his interest in the writings of the Renaissance Cabbalists (G. Pico della Mirandola, J. Reuchlin) and of more recent Cabbalists (Knorr von Rosenroth, F.M. van Helmont, R. Fludd). In the *Compendium*, his enthusiasm for the Cabbala to have waned with respect to the *Introductio* to the history of Hebrew philosophy: it is given only two pages after making a clear distinction between the ancient (true) and more recent (false) Cabbala. A full analysis of Buddeus's studies on the Cabbala can be found in S. Masi, "Eclettismo e storia della filosofia in J.F. Budde", pp. 190–198. On this point Brucker broke away from his master, declaring that it was impossible to distinguish a *Cabbala vetus*, which, strictly speaking, consists of the interpretation of the Bible in a mystical sense, from a *Cabbala recentior*, which as early as the time of Christ had corrupted Revelation with pagan philosophical teachings: "We are not permitted to argue about this exegetic Cabbala, which we can distinguish from philosophy, for the sake of clarity, by using this term, since it does not relate to our present purpose; however we can point out that without doubt many additions and variations have been attributed to Cabbalistic teachings that really belong to later times, and that it is difficult, if not impossible, to define them clearly, that is, to distinguish the pure and authentic from the contaminated and adulterated, given that all the surviving Cabbalistic books are so corrupted that, if we wished to follow up this distinction it would not be possible, for example in the Book of Sohar, to separate additions made by modern philosophers from what has come down to us from very early philosophers, unless we decide to consider as genuine only what agrees with the Christian mysteries; but this way of reasoning is obviously a vicious circle" (Brucker, II, p. 394).

in part in the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, contained in the pagan concept of metempsychosis, and in the memory of the Trinitarian principle which was sensed in a confused way by the Egyptians: "Some traces of the doctrine revealed and spread by means of tradition could certainly be found in Barbarian philosophy" (p. 277). Pythagoras is placed in the very same chapter as the Barbarians, because of the moral purpose that characterized the way of teaching in his school, the double method of philosophizing, and some doctrines, such as metempsychosis, that he held in common with the followers of Eastern philosophy.

A new type of research, based on speculation, began in Greece with the Ionic School. The first, naturalist, phase, from Thales to Anaxagoras, was followed by the prominence of moral questions with Socrates, who, "having given up contemplation of natural things turned his attention to setting out and prescribing customs and behaviour" (p. 121), thus leading philosophy "from heaven to earth" in Cicero's words. The figure of Socrates assumes an important role: his struggle against the Sophists more or less foreshadowed the struggle of modern philosophy against the empty metaphysical debates and arrogance of the Scholastics (*supercilium scholasticum*).

Plato was Socrates's disciple, but he did not remain faithful to his master's teaching. His philosophy has an outward appearance of inconsistency since it experienced various influences, Heraclitus on sensible things, Pythagoras on intelligible things, Socrates on morals. His system is interpreted according to the models of Christian Platonism and Neoplatonism. Plotinus is regarded as a genuine follower of Plato: "Plotinus flourished after the birth of Christ and under the Emperor Alexander Severus; he is believed to have followed the teachings of Plato more carefully than all others" (p. 155). The foundation of all philosophy is the idea of God, as opposed to matter, as the creator of the world "freely and without necessity". Ideas are not the principles of things independent of God but the *causa instrumentalis*, derived "from the highest intelligence of the creator".

Even if not all Platonism can be adapted into the sphere of Christianity because of its acceptance of an idea wholly extraneous to revelation such as the eternity of matter, there is no doubt that for Buddeus Plato was of all of the pagan philosophers the one who came closest to the truth. This was due to the influence of Hebrewism: "perhaps he designated with the name of 'idea' the same thing that the Hebrews termed Sephiroth" (p. 164). "Starting from revelation, Plato had reached some understanding even of the Trinity; he distinguished the creator from the highest good as the origin of created things, and distinguished the soul of the world from the creator, admitting, therefore, that in the divinity there are three substances subordinate among themselves" (p. 164), which, however, he defined in Arian terms: "How did Plato reach this idea? Some, among them Jean Le Clerc, maintain that he could have reached ideas of this sort by means of reasoning. [...]. Others, on the other hand, maintain that this notion of the Trinity came to Plato and to other philosophers by means of tradition, the very beginning of which is to be sought among the Hebrew people and their ancestors. Ralph Cudworth is of this opinion [...]. I have already demonstrated, in the *Instit. Theolog. Dogmat.*, Chapter 1, p. 438, that the former theory is to be preferred as the more probable. Given that the

Platonists posit a subordination between these three hypostases, it is clear that this opinion of theirs is somewhat different from the true and genuine doctrine of the Christian Church. Therefore, it is erroneous to declare that the dogma of the Trinity was taken by the Christian Church from Platonic philosophy" (pp. 170–171).

The Aristotelian system, sharply contrasted to that of Plato ("Aristotle was a disciple of Plato, but was wholly ungrateful to him; he founded his own school which has almost always been in conflict with the Platonic school": p. 186), has a naturalistic hallmark; God is the first intelligence and the first mover, "thus the first mover, being in its turn unmoved, moves everything and in this way the second intelligences, excited by admiration for the first mover, of necessity move their orbits, so that in the end everything is brought back to a certain necessity and no space is left for divine providence" (p. 207). Buddeus, allying himself with Luther, maintained that Aristotelian philosophy expresses a purely human point of view and so differs from the principles of Christian truth, unlike Platonism which in part accepts the light of revelation. In Peripatetic physics there is no reference to a creator God and for this reason the world is eternal "from both sides, uncreated and incorruptible" (p. 212), and the soul of man is mortal, according to the authentic interpretation made by Averroes and Pomponazzi: "for when it seems that the soul of man is declared to be immortal, it is clear that this refers to the *mens* or *intellectus agens*, and since this is common to all men, one cannot affirm of individuals that their soul is immortal. The psyche, or soul, inasmuch as it is distinct from the mind, is according to Aristotle's teaching definitely mortal. It is as if he had taught that the soul of man is mortal" (p. 222).

Aristotelian ethics, finally, wholly involved in the search for ways to make life pleasant in this world, has a Pelagian hallmark: "Since anyone can carry out those things that are sufficient for the attainment of outward happiness with the help of a certain amount of education and practice and with the powers of his own nature, the moral teaching of Aristotle agrees perfectly with the principles that Pelagius introduced into the Christian Church and that right-minded people have condemned. Having understood this, it is not surprising that our M. Luther should have judged the whole of Aristotle's philosophy, but above all the ethics, not entirely favourably" (p. 233).

Buddeus's interpretation of Stoicism as a forerunner of Spinozism is typical. The debate with the Stoics and with Justus Lipsius, *magnus Stoicorum admirator*, is a constant theme in the historiography of Buddeus, who on this point followed Jakob Thomasius and Bayle: the Stoics defined God as the soul of the world "or, as they say in the schools, *forma informans*" (pp. 253–254); everything is in submission to the unchangeable laws of destiny. For the most part, the Stoics were hypocrites "and among the Stoics there were certainly some who stood out for their zeal for temperance, modesty, firmness [of mind], and the other virtues, as far as these virtues can be suitable for a pagan; but some of them were ignoble hypocrites who pretended to be philosophers in their outward appearance" (p. 265).

The other direction taken by Greek philosophy, represented by Eleatism, after the turning point of Leucippus and Democritus, had the same final outcome as Epicureanism. Buddeus was inclined to acquit Epicurus of many of the criticisms

levelled against him as to his habits and life, though without making him into a model of the virtuous atheist, as Bayle had done; he expressed reservations about his philosophy of nature, which hinged on the theory of atoms, because it removes any place for God in the creation and control of the world. Epicurean teaching is not without value on the scientific level; indeed it constitutes one of the most serious attempts in Antiquity to study the "causes" of natural phenomena. However, the omission of any theological reference renders its explanation of reality incomplete and reveals the limits of a philosophy that assigns too much importance to human reason: "The enquiries that Epicurus carried out into natural causes should not only not be despised, but they deserve particular praise. And those who oppose superstition in this way are not to be condemned, so long as they do not confuse this with religion. But to go as far as leaving the supreme God no place to direct and rule natural causes, with the intention of eliminating all fear of God from the mind of mortal men – this is the characteristic of unwise men who make wrong use of their intelligence" (p. 323).

Mediaeval philosophy began with the fall of the Eastern Empire and was followed by "terrible barbarism and the stagnation of learning" (p. 336). The Arabs recovered first; they took up the study of philosophy once again, especially the texts of Aristotle. Scholasticism in the West originated from Arabic Aristotelian philosophy. Buddeus's condemnation of the Scholastics (Alexander of Hales, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and Ockham) is drastic and makes no allowances: they spent their time on pointless battles of words, they argued ad nauseam about *praedicamenta* and *praedicabilia* "and about interminable trivialities of this kind", they joined philosophy and theology together "making use of philosophy exclusively in order to join it with theology" (p. 347), confused physics with metaphysics "and so they almost converted the whole of physics into metaphysics, arguing fiercely about whether physics was an art or a science, whether it causes movement or not" (p. 356). A number of thinkers emerged from the context of Scholasticism, such as Roger Bacon and Albertus Magnus, who set aside metaphysical disputes and devoted themselves to a more thorough study of nature, "being more expert in the mysteries of nature than the spirit of the age in which they lived could allow" (p. 361). However, they were suspected of magic.

Modern philosophy is seen as a revolt against the Scholastics: "the more recent thinkers have followed a different way of philosophizing" (p. 363). Among the moderns, Buddeus concentrated his attention on the *novatores*, those who initiated new philosophical systems, and of these the first place belonged to Francis Bacon, "who, putting aside those abstract and futile speculations, wished to come down to specific questions and to examine the nature of things more carefully by means of experiment" (p. 409). Particularly praiseworthy was his battle against the principle of authority and in favour of the elimination of prejudice, "which he calls idols of the mind, since they are an obstacle to the knowledge of the truth" (p. 411). Bacon's doctrine of the *idola* was taken up again in the Cartesian concept of doubt as an indispensable means for reaching the truth. Although Buddeus did not deny Descartes the title of the most important philosopher of the modern age (*praecipuus philosophiae restaurator*), he criticized a large part of his philosophy. His method,

borrowed from mathematics, was not only unoriginal (*in istis regulis nihil novi dixit*: p. 474) but also inadequate, and in certain respects dangerous and misleading: "it should not be used without some caution". The ineffectiveness of this method is clear in physics, where Descartes did not discover the true principles or the probable hypotheses of natural things, but principles valid only in the field of logical possibility: "The criticisms of Andreas Rüdiger are even stronger; he has shown brilliantly that because of the confusion of philosophical reasoning with mathematics, Descartes has constructed the whole of his physics on somewhat uncertain foundations and has introduced neither true principles nor probable hypotheses, but only possible principles" (p. 481). However, Buddeus believed that he could acquit Descartes of the accusation of godlessness; Spinoza, Lodewijk Meyer and Balthasar Becker had gone further than Descartes: "they went further and misused his philosophy, drawing from it profane and godless consequences" (p. 487).

It is worth noting Buddeus's effort to describe the most recent philosophy, entering into the most lively debates of the time. As a historian he did not fail to mention the contribution made by Tschirnhaus and Locke to logic; he spent some time on analysing the philosophy of Leibniz, who, in opposition to the tendency of modern thought, had turned to the metaphysics of the Ancients and the Scholastics: "Just as Descartes took on the task of correcting physics, so Pufendorf did the same for moral philosophy, or rather the law of nature; Leibniz applied the powers of his intelligence to metaphysics, which greatly pleased the Scholastics" (p. 492). Buddeus indirectly touched on the salient points of Wolff's philosophy, of which he was one of the chief opponents. According to Buddeus, there is a principle of necessity in Leibniz; this is expressed in pre-arranged harmony and in the idea of a better world. But, more than Leibniz, the polemic attacks Wolff and his school, who repeated Leibniz' teaching blindly without submitting it to critical examination, arriving, moreover, at consequences that were dangerous to the faith: "There were some who tried hard not only to defend the principles of this learned man, about whom we have already recorded the most important things, but also to impose them with great force as if they were divine oracles; of them Christian Wolff, Ludwig Ph.Thümmig, and Georg B. Bilfinger stand out. Thus they gave others the opportunity of investigating and demonstrating them less carefully, and in the end these principles moved so far from the truth that they were deprived of any foundation; some doctrines were constituted in such a way that they could create a substantial danger to some important points of Christian doctrine" (p. 499). The part devoted to those who renewed practical philosophy also was extremely topical; here Buddeus emphasized the contribution of Grotius, Pufendorf, and Ch. Thomasius to the birth of a system of natural law in which, as we have seen, Buddeus the historian had a strong interest.

5.5.4.4. Buddeus' importance in philosophical historiography is due also to his contribution to the modernization of method. This need had already found a response in his *Introductio ad historiam philosophiae Ebraeorum*: "After having considered carefully and examined everything, I have decided to survey all the schools of the philosophers, both ancient and modern, firstly recounting their history, and also their main followers in order, then briefly expounding, as far as is possible, their teaching.

Hence I wished to demonstrate the damage or the usefulness that the Church has derived from them, with the addition of a dissertation for each individual school in an important chapter of Church history" ("Praefatio").

The first part includes the history of the philosophical schools, with information on the founder of each, his life, his opponents, and his followers. Buddeus took care to draw a complete picture of each school, citing the most illustrious members, giving an account of their biographies, their works, and any later divergences from the original teachings of the schools. The description of the Platonic school gives some idea of the dimension that the notion of "secta" had for Buddeus: it includes all those who explicitly followed a particular master in various periods. Plato's *sectatores* are divided into pagans and Christians; among the former he distinguished those who lived before Christ and constituted the Academy strictly speaking, from others who lived in the Christian era (Plotinus, Iamblicus and Proclus among the Greeks, Apuleius and Chalcidius among the Latins). Then Buddeus moves on to the Christian representatives of Platonism (Justin, Origen, Clement of Alexandria), mentioning finally the contribution that Platonic philosophy made to the development of mystical theology (Dionysius the Areopagite).

The history of the schools is only an introductory section; the most important point in the historical investigation is the account of the particular teachings of each school. Buddeus thought that previous histories of philosophy had been inadequate because of their scant attention to the content of the various philosophies. But it was even more important to understand the real meaning of each philosophical system: "One should not judge the thought of a philosopher unless one has a full knowledge of his philosophical system" (*Isagoge ad theologiam*, p. 213).[19]

First of all, it is necessary to establish the core idea of the system from which the various theories originate. The section on Stoicism is typical of this method. Buddeus had initially been attracted by many statements made by Seneca and Marcus Aurelius into thinking, with Lipsius, that Stoicism could easily be assimilated to Christian truth. As he came to a deeper understanding of the system, he realised that it was none other than a form of Spinozism. It is only by bearing this pre-supposition in mind that one can understand the true meaning of the morals of the Stoics, apparently so noble and rational but in reality deceitful and ungodly: "but if one considers everything more carefully and the real authentic meaning they hide under brilliant words, their teaching will take on a very different aspect. We have observed above that they understand God to be merely like nature. And we have also shown that for them everything submits to fate [. . .]. In their teaching, to follow and

[19] Walch, in his introduction to the *Compendium*, also emphasized this aspect of Buddeus' method: "The *Delineatio* itself is greatly recommended. In it, the author does not simply list the principal schools, their history and their followers, but he has carefully given an account of their main teachings, in order to show the entire system of each school, something that, as it happens, had not been done in such a way by G.J. Vossius, or G. Hornius, or by A. Gravius, or by anyone else who has dedicated himself to the writing of this kind of history up to the present day" (*Compendium*, "Lectori benevolo", p. [13]).

imitate God is equivalent to no more than tolerating everything that happens with a serene and patient heart, since because of the laws of ineluctable fate things could not happen in any other way" (pp. 262–263).

In the *Compendium* the method consistently chosen is to set out not the philosophy of each author but the complete system of each school. Only in the seventeenth century, with the establishing of eclecticism, did philosophy become the expression of choice and individual research, whereas from ancient times until the Renaissance further study of thought had always taken place within, and within the limits of, the various schools. For this reason the way the ideas are set out reflects this division into schools: the system is hardly ever considered to be the fruit of the brilliant intuition of an individual author, but rather the result of a long process of integration accompanying a certain way of thought over a long period of time. The corpus of Platonic teaching was the result of a long process of thorough research which began with Plato, continued in the Academy, and came down to Plotinus and the Platonism of the Church Fathers. Thus, together with the theory of ideas, Buddeus speaks of the three hypostases and of their possible influences in the area of the Trinitarian dogma, and mentions the threefold division of man into soul, spirit, and body, inserting into the system ideas that were extraneous to original Platonic thought. It must have seemed more difficult to Buddeus to carry out a unitary reconstruction of the systems of the other schools, such as the Eleatic, which numbered among its representatives philosophers as diverse as Parmenides and Epicurus; he took a position against the inconsistency of their teaching, "the principles of the Eleatic school do not seem to be sufficiently consistent" (p. 295), but in the end he did not give up his customary methodological scheme, suggesting that Epicureanism was the most mature and definitive expression of the school. Even Barbarian and Scholastic philosophy acquire the appearance of schools and their teachings also are described in a unitary manner: "Barbaricae philosophiae summa" (pp. 70–72); "Logica, Metaphysica et Physica scholasticorum", "Doctrina illorum moralis" (pp. 356–360).

After recounting the history of the schools and describing their systems, Buddeus examines the relationship of philosophical ideas with theology and the history of the Church. As we have seen, these relationships were the real motive for Buddeus's interest in the history of philosophy and were the reason for his characteristic method. In this theological perspective, the question of atheism and Spinozism became the fundamental point of view from which all systems, ancient and modern, were judged. Plato receives a more favourable assessment than Aristotle because his philosophy was further from the ungodliness of Spinoza. Even modern philosophers are considered and judged in the light of the dangers of their teachings for religious truth, as in the case of Leibniz and Wolff.

Although the defence of orthodox religion was the characteristic element of his historiographical analysis, Buddeus claimed that his account of the systems was in accord with the genuine *sententia* of the authors. While it is limited by size, the *Compendium* offers the reader accurate documentation on the most important problems of interpretation in the very full apparatus of notes. The reliability of the notes and comments that Buddeus supplies is continually weighed up and discussed, particularly by means of comparison with the actual teaching of the school. Buddeus

did not restrict himself to consulting authors who had specialized in the history of philosophy, but often used theoretical works containing only indirect historical references. He put together ancient evidence and modern interpretations, giving equal value to information from Diogenes Laertius or the Church Fathers, Stanley, or Cudworth.

Buddeus very seldom uses the actual works of the philosophers, often even omitting to give their titles and referring the reader to the relevant bibliographical catalogues by Jonsius, Struve, and Morhof. Apart from some quotations from the *Timaeus*, he bases his reconstruction of Platonic thought on two texts by Albinus of Smyrna. The first of these, attributed to a certain Alcinous, had been summarized by Stanley in his *History of Philosophy*, but Buddeus's reconstruction is explained mainly through comparison with modern historiographical works, in particular the young Brucker's *Historia philosophica doctrinae de ideis*. These bibliographical references immediately lead the discussion to the level of possible interpretations of Platonism, while the account of the literal meaning of the teachings, as comes from reading the Dialogues, is relegated to second place.

Instead of being a calm objective view of the philosophical principles held by the various schools, the *Compendium* offers an outline of the disputes that arose over these principles, with particular reference to the character and interpretation of the system; in this context, the point of view of Buddeus the historian, himself an eclectic philosopher, continually becomes clear even when he is reconstructing the philosophical teachings, because, while comparing them, he is obliged to clarify his own thinking. A further reason for paying attention to the debate on dogmas is the didactic purpose of the history of philosophy which is thus shown to be the most suitable means for introducing young people to a deeper understanding of philosophical questions.

5.5.5. *Historia atheismi*

5.5.5.1. The *Theses de atheismo et superstitione* consists of ten chapters. The first seven are on atheism (pp. 1–654) and the last three on superstition (pp. 654–816). The first chapter ("An dentur athei? Ubi et historia atheismi succincte traditur et ab eius suspicione viri quidam innocentes liberantur", pp. 1–205) is described by Buddeus as "a supplement" to his *Historia philosophica* in twenty-eight brief paragraphs. After defining the historical range of atheism, Buddeus sets the conceptual boundaries (Chapter II: "Atheismi quid et quotuplex? Ubi et praecipua atheismi fundamenta exhibentur", pp. 206–239); the teaching connected with it, such as the denial of the immortality of the soul and the spirit (Chapter III: "De dogmatibus, quae cum atheismo coniuncta sunt, aut ad eum ducunt", pp. 240–307); and the causes, properties and effects of atheism, among the last named are harm done to the state, which "cannot stand without religion" (Chapter IV: "De atheismi causis, proprietatibus et effectibus", pp. 307–354). The middle chapter sets out proofs for the existence of God with metaphysical arguments (proofs from movement, from contingency, from cause), physical arguments (the order and harmony of the universe and of the human body), and historical arguments (the origin of the arts and of

kingdoms proves "that this world has a beginning") (Chapter V: "Deum esse demonstratur", pp. 356–456). Then two chapters deal with the refutation of the foundations of ungodliness and ungodly teachings (Chapter VI: "Fundamenti atheismi eversio, ubi et ad praecipua atheorum argumenta respondetur", pp. 456–535; Chapter VII: "Refutatio dogmatum cum atheismo coniunctorum aut ad eum ducentium", pp. 536–654). Superstition is linked to atheism not only because it too is against true religion, but also because it sometimes occurs as a reaction to a widespread atheistic attitude. Among the forms of superstition Buddeus lists idolatry, the reduction of religious worship to mere rituals and formulae, and the fanaticism of those who claim "divine mandate" ("Superstitio quid et quotuplex?" pp. 654–682; "Speciatim de iis superstitionum generibus, quae directe circa numinis cultum versantur", pp. 683–772; "De causis, effectibus, proprietatibus et remediis superstitionis", pp. 772–816).

The form of the work is based on Bayle's *Dictionnaire*: the work is divided clearly, in its printed style too, into *theses* and *observationes*, the former summarizing the main points of the argument, and the long explanatory notes extending the account into the area of philosophy and referring the reader to the bibliography for further detailed study. The work is preceded by a lengthy "Adlocutio ad auditores" of 32 pages and concludes with three indices: "Capitum quibus haec commentatio absolvitur series"; "Index auctorum quorum scripta et testimonia hinc inde advocantur" (14 pages); "Index rerum" (56 pages).

5.5.5.2. The historical inquiry into atheism goes back to the beginnings of humanity *(ante diluvium*) and continues up to Buddeus's contemporaries. The result is a complete survey, not only of those who have explicitly denied God, but also of those suspected of being doubters, and those who have fought against atheism and superstition. The division into paragraphs basically follows the division into periods used in the *Compendium historiae philosophiae*: Hebrews, Barbarian peoples, Romans, the Christian world, and the modern era. But here the most important reason for the division is logical, and is provided by the definition of atheism, which can be practical or theoretical: the former consists of the corruption of manners, the latter derives from a philosophical attitude and is either sceptical or dogmatic. This latter can then be summarised as four fundamental expressions, corresponding to four philosophical systems: "Dogmatic atheism is, in its turn, different according to the difference of the system by which it tries to explain natural phenomena excluding God. One, in fact, will be Aristotelian, another Stoic, another Epicurean, and finally another Spinozist as they are called today after the chief restorer. All the atheistic systems can be traced back to these four sorts: of the others, it is not worth recording their origin" (p. 225).

The four atheistic systems, divided further into the first rank (Epicureanism and Spinozism, which specifically deny the divinity), and second rank (Aristotelianism and Stoicism, which deny certain fundamental attributes of God, such as liberty), form a metahistorical criterion for arranging the historical material: "If there are other systems of atheists, either they can be referred back to one of those already mentioned, or they collapse immediately through their own weakness" (p. 234).

The pantheism of the Chaldeans was not very different from that of Spinoza and the Eleatics. Thus the historiographical framework is arranged according to a conceptual classification rather than according to distinct historical periods.

5.5.5.3. First of all, Buddeus examines the atheism of the Ancient world, beginning with the Hebrews and the Barbarian peoples. He finds that in the first phase of human history superstition, nearly always accompanied by pantheistic teachings, was very widespread: "What we have said about the Sabeans can be confirmed with regard to the Chaldeans, that they taught things that some consider to seem to favour pantheism; and this was not unrelated to the godlessness that was increasing among the pagans – godlessness joined to the most absurd superstition" (p. 15). However, the author disagrees with the pantheistic interpretation of Moses supported by Toland, and Collins' idea that Solomon and the prophets were free thinkers. By emphasizing the purity of ancient Hebrew wisdom, Buddeus believed he was unmasking a typical technique of modern atheists who invoked well-known authorities in their support, in order to make their position stronger and to sow panic among their opponents: "by numbering innocent men among the atheists, they not only cause great offence to the former but also do a favour to the atheists themselves, as it is a great honour for them and useful for trapping simple people, if they manage to bring men of intelligence and good learning in their own community without their knowledge" (p. 6).

The first clear philosphical description of atheism occurrs in the context of Greek thought and is based on the four systems that accompanied its every possible theoretical formulation. Platonism can be acquitted of the accusation of ungodliness, as it recognized a dualism between God and matter and accepted the creationistic dogma. The Aristotelian system, on the other hand, although not directly built on denial of the divinity, favoured atheism since it gave a naturalistic explanation of the origin of the world and the causes of phenomena: "the same philosophical system constructed by Aristotle, has been contrived in such a way that any atheist could accept it" (p. 40). God is linked to the world by an almost necessary bond: "God governs the highest Heaven, or rather he is the first intelligence and the first mover and therefore his concern is that of the *primum mobile*, which for the Ancients was the orbit of the fixed stars or the eighth sphere; as to the second spheres, that is the orbits of the seven planets, the second intelligences take care of them; it follows that the first mover, whom Aristotle called God, does not take any care of sublunary things" (p. 41).

The atheism of the Stoics is more explicit, since they explained the relationship between God and Nature in terms of necessity, going as far as identifying God with the soul of the world, that is with Nature itself: "therefore, for the Stoics God and Nature are the same thing. It is clear from this what should be understood when they taught that the greatest good consists of following God or when they said that the wise man lives with the Gods, and other things of the same kind. Everything was precisely directed towards this end, that one should obey the laws of fate by which all nature is ruled. At the same time it can be demonstrated how teachings that are so ungodly can frequently be hidden under such wonderful expressions" (p. 53).

The first coherent expression of Spinozism in Antiquity was made by the Eleatics, from Xenophanes to Zeno, who believed in the oneness of substance: "By coming close to the Eleatic school, atheism seems to be in sympathy with it. Moreover, their teachings were totally in agreement with Spinoza's ravings. Xenophanes of Colophon, in fact, taught that the one is all. In the same way, Parmenides, Melissus, and Zeno of Elea denied all movement and therefore all beginnings and corruptions with the sole purpose of reinforcing the argument that only one substance exists" (p. 55).

The fourth expression of atheism in antiquity can be traced back to the second phase of the Eleatic school, in the atomist Epicurean stage, not so much for the inclusion of atoms ("Leucippus is not to be criticised for the hypothesis of atoms considered in itself, but rather he is to be praised since this hypothesis, if correctly understood, is very useful for the development of a more accurate natural doctrine": p. 63), as for having excluded the concept of creation and providence. The Epicureans hypocritically admitted the existence of gods but denied that they acted in any way in the government of the world, thus removing the very basis of religious worship: "I find it difficult to believe that they could have said seriously and conscientiously that God is to be worshipped and loved even if there is no hope of Heaven nor any fear of Hell" (p. 70).

If, as we shall see, the worst of all the forms of atheism was that of Spinoza, the most widespread historically was that of Aristotle. Superstition flourished in the Middle Ages, encouraged by the Roman Church, but there was no shortage of atheists, such as David of Dinant, who defined God as first matter: "The source of this error could have been above all Aristotle, who at that time reigned supreme in the universities [. . .]. After excluding the Creator and deducing all things from matter, it was easy to consider first matter as God himself" (p. 107).

The list of modern atheists is very long. The majority were Italian ("it has already been observed by learned men that Italy was the prolific mother of atheists and other ungodly men": p. 111) and Aristotelians: Aretino, Poggio Bracciolini, Bruno ("in reality his thought agrees with Spinoza's madness": p. 115), Vanini, Cardano, Campanella, Machiavelli, Cesalpino, Bérigard, Cremonini, Giovio, Politian, Barbaro, and Della Casa. Among the supposed atheists of the Italian Renaissance, Buddeus believed that only Pomponazzi could be acquitted: "As to his book on the immortality of the soul that first gave rise to this accusation, seeing that he declared not once only, but often, that he firmly believed in the immortality of the soul because Holy Scripture affirms it and that he denied that it could be demonstrated according to the principles of Aristotelian philosophy, I do not see how one can accuse him of atheism. If it were so, the same accusation of godlessness should also be levelled against the finest men, even theologians of our Church, who insist that the immortality of the human soul can be reliably demonstrated only on the basis of Holy Scripture, but not on reason" (p. 119).

Despite some errors, the Cartesian system is not defined as atheist, but that of Spinoza definitely is: "he is to be regarded as the master of the atheists of our age, as he did not acknowledge that there was any God other than nature itself; this is the same as if he had expressly taught that God does not exist" (p. 163). What

was particular about Spinoza's atheism, compared with the monism of the Eleatics, was that it was demonstrated rationally and philosophically: "It can be clearly seen that he had an intelligence that was thoroughly philosphical and capable of making geometrical demonstrations. From what we have said so far, and from what I have specifically shown in the *Dissertatio de Spinozismo ante Spinozam*, it appears that before Spinoza there were others who agreed with him on the fundamental principle, that is to say all those who did not recognize any other God than nature itself, and who nowadays are called pantheists by some. However, Spinoza was the first to reduce this godlessness, with the greatest care, to the form of a system and to adapt the geometric method to it, though with ill-omened success. Therefore, this form of atheism has quite rightly taken his name and is called Spinozism" (p. 165).

Buddeus then plunges right into the debate on contemporary atheism, which involved in particular the figures of Bayle and Toland. Although Buddeus thought highly of the author of the *Dictionnaire* who provided him with much of the information for this and for his other historical works ("It is difficult to deny to Pierre Bayle praise for his refined erudition and profound intelligence": p. 156), he suspected him of atheism: "Certainly, Manichaeism is not very different from atheism. Anyone who confesses a double principle that is independent and equal [by nature] in reality does not confess any God. In fact, it belongs to the same notion of God being the only independent principle, which cannot be opposed by another with the same power. And he who is convinced that the force of reason is so weak that it cannot reply to the objections of the atheists against Providence in any other way than using the absurd hypothesis of the Manichaeans, is in fact conceding victory to the atheists. It would be the same if he said that those objections could not be resolved as Bayle eloquently states on more than one occasion. The cause of this was, so to speak, having raised up faith so much as to depreciate reason, and this has the effect of confusing simpler people" (pp. 156–157). More explicit and even shameless was the atheism of Toland, "who not only is an atheist, but also does all he can to make sure that he is considered as one" (p. 180). In England there was a long line of defenders of the divinity who opposed Toland: R. Boyle, S. Parker, H. More, R. Cudworth, N. Grew, W. Nichols, J. Ray, R. Bentley, S. Clarke, and G. Cheyne.

The final paragraph acquits the fathers of Protestantism, from Luther to Spener, of the accusation of godlessness levelled against them by the Catholics. On the contrary, they were models of Christian living: they put into practice the ideal of religiousness that emerges from their writings, the purpose of which was precisely that of showing "the middle course that men should steer between atheism and supersitition" ("Adlocutio ad auditores", p. [12]), that is to say a religion rationally justified but firmly anchored in revelation.

5.5.5.4. The appeal to history is an important aspect of the theological method; in the case of atheism historical inquiry is not only useful, but also necessary: "I believe that I have done this not without very serious reason. Above all, it leads us to understanding a little more thoroughly those whom we have occasion to confront as enemies; and it is appropriate that we should know to what

extent and in what area someone is to be considered an enemy, and we should line up for battle and not go out to fight like blind gladiators" ("Adlocutio ad auditores", p. [13]).

Atheism must be attacked at its foundations. It originates from a certain way of undertaking philosophical inquiry; it is the expression and consequence of a system. From a methodological point of view too, the history of atheism should relate to the history of philosophy. The main problem is to reconstruct the system: "Moreover, while exposing those who have quite rightly been accused of atheism, I have carefully presented their system in a brief summary. In this way I have made clear all the fundamental ideas of the atheists in order to be able to refute them more easily, and at the same time I have uncovered their deceitful tricks" ("Adlocutio ad auditores", p. [14]). The two aspects of Buddeus's method are described in this programmatic note. Above all, he emphasizes the need to refer all atheistic statements back to the particular system of each school, of which they are direct consequences. However, this clarification of the system also has an apologetic purpose, in that it involves the historian in the battle against the principles of atheism as he reveals its contradictions and errors.

The discussion of Spinoza's atheism is indicative of this procedure. Spinoza often speaks of God, but Buddeus wants to demonstrate, by going back to the foundations of his system, that this is a matter of pure deceit. In fact, all Spinoza's philosophy is based on the theory that only one substance exists, and that it has to coincide with material substance, of which everyone has some direct experience. Spinoza's atheism originates from this; his God "is none other than nature itself, or rather this universe, whose primary properties, eternal and infinite, are thought and extension; however, individual things are nothing but modes of these properties and attributes [. . .]. He aims at this, and this is what lies at the foundation of all his system and what he intends to demonstrate, that one substance only exists" (pp. 169–170).

Buddeus was under great pressure to prove, in opposition to the Spinozists of his time, whether open or hidden, the absurdity of a definition of God which denied any principle of distinction between the divinity and material substance: "In reality, this distinction does not work if the one same substance is called in different associations now God and now the world. Having established that the world is contained within the same divine essence, we should then have declared that the essence of the world is no different from the essence of God" (p. 176).

The main nucleus of the system is theological, for it is based on a definition of God and is characterized by the relationship between God and the world. The history of atheism is the history of erroneous answers to the theological question; in this sense, it coincides with that part of the history of philosophy that also occupies the most space in the *Compendium* and is a decisive factor in the establishment of the value of each form of philosophy. Buddeus starts from a notion of divinity that clearly has the features of a Christian concept, which he considers to be consistent with correct reason. He assesses all philosophical systems on this basis, and considers that the absence of any possible reference to the concept of Providence implies a denial of God. For this reason he defines Epicurus as an atheist, "nor could he judge

otherwise someone who believed that gods placed in the space between the worlds lead a happy life" (p. 66).

The importance of the ever-present apologetic aspect in the nature and purpose of the book leads Buddeus to prefer, among his sources, those authors who openly stood against atheism, such as Cicero and the Church Fathers, and to mistrust others, such as Bayle, who might have been influenced by an unconfessed desire to justify the godlessness implicit in their theories. Buddeus's task is to search for the atheism that originated in the system; by reducing biographical information to the essentials, he is able to concentrate on the content of philosophical doctrines, with the aim of pointing out the errors present in each of them. Thus the history of atheism becomes one of the most interesting ways of access to the history of philosophy; it justifies studying it as an indispensable means for the solution not only to philosophical and scientific problems but also to the fundamental theological question.

5.5.6. While it was linked to a historiographical tradition in Germany that already included such illustrious names as Jakob Thomasius and Tribbechow, Buddeus's work tends to be regarded as something original, a cultural achievement destined to bring about a radical renewal of historico-philosophical studies. The author had an ambitious plan: he wanted to create a new systemization of the whole history of philosophy in order to produce a valid research tool for the theologian and the philosopher. The *Compendium historiae philosophiae* fulfilled this objective, though to a limited extent: it was no longer a question of studying the history of philosophers but rather the system of the teachings of each school (*vera veterum dogmata investigare*), with the teachings considered in themselves and in relation to theology and Church history.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect is the breadth of the historical framework, which no longer concentrated only or primarily on ancient philosophy, but aimed to include the threads of the development of more recent philosophy, from the Renaissance to the early eighteenth century. Buddeus was anxious to carry out a comparison between ancient and modern philosophy that would demonstrate clearly the positive aspects and the limitations of both ("Recentiores ita consulendi, ne contemnemus veteres": *Isagoge ad theologiam*, p. 210). This made it necessary to survey the whole history of philosophy, the most important part of a general course of study within which there would be an appropriate place for monographs on particular periods or schools. It seemed to Buddeus that this need had not yet been fully realised; in 1720, in a new preface to the *Introductio ad historiam philosophiae Ebraeorum*, he acknowledged that many historical studies had appeared in recent years, but lamented the lack of a general work: "We are fortunate in our time to have such an abundance of documents relating to the history of philosophy, since men noted for their intelligence and sound doctrine have dragged out of the darkness the sources that allow us to know more accurately the teachings of ancient as well as modern philosophers. However, it seems to me that so far no one has set out systematically the history and thought of each and every philosopher, nor have they shown their usefulness to Church history. And this would not be difficult today,

given the abundance of books on this subject which we owe to the diligence of very learned men" (*Intr. ad hist. phil. Ebr*., Halle 1720, "Praefatio Nova", p. [2]).

The moment had come to move on from specialized research to a great history of philosophy: the *Historiae philosophicae* that had raised the question of a general and systematic survey during the seventeenth century, were by now considered to be out of date. The only one which Buddeus used at all frequently was the work by Stanley, which he praised for its accurate information and its organisation: "he put in order everything that he could gather, and arranged it in a certain framework" (*Isagoge ad theologiam*, p. 197); however, he preferred Olearius's Latin translation to the original edition because of the additions to the text that illustrated the philosophical theories more clearly.

Buddeus's work represents an important stage in the history of the genre as it is supported by the author's awareness of the specialised nature of the tasks required of the history of philosophy, together with an attempt to revise the methodology. In this way the history of philosophy aims at becoming an autonomous discipline while retaining a special relationship with philosophy and theology, to which it is an essential introduction. The correct solution to any kind of theoretical question involves some comparison with the philosophers of the past. As Braun declares, eclecticism means a transformation in the relationship between the historian and the object of his research: "The *collectanea* are no longer of interest. What is recorded is another past: a new object, which has to be determined through the sameness of the truth and the otherness of errors. In history, eclecticism finds a field that fits its purpose, but the very foundation of the choice rests on some instinct that allows it to recognize good wherever it is found, a good that consists of a primary experience, urreferable to anything else. It is this original power that is at the root of the new freedom that the Pietists, and Buddeus in particular, rediscovered with respect to history" (Braun, p. 98).

What Buddeus undertook was a history which was deeply committed, with the purely erudite aspect pushed into the background. His fundamental attitude was a defence of religion, so that he paid extra attention to the discussion on atheism and Spinozism, as typical of many philosophical systems. The didactic requirements emphasized this aspect of Buddeus's philosophy; his intention was to offer an "orthodox" outline of the history of philosophy from the Lutheran point of view, to provide young people with a reference book which would enable them to understand unambiguously the dangers and errors present in every philosophical doctrine. The interpretation of Aristotle is typical: Buddeus regarded him as an atheist because he denied any liberty to God in his relationship with the world. Reimmann, a contemporary who was certainly not hostile to Buddeus, criticized this interpretation because it had not been seriously checked against the Aristotelian texts: "No passage is ever cited from Aristotle, nor can be, which says that God is united to the world by a totally necessary bond, in the way of a form – certainly not an informing form but an assisting form" (J.F. Reimmann, *Historia universalis atheismi et atheorum*, Hildesheim, 1725, p. 185). A more serious and more hurtful judgement, all the more so because of the personal attacks that had made him give up his teaching at Halle, came from Ch. Wolff, who accused Buddeus of interpreting philosophical texts in a

partisan spirit without worrying about objectivity and intellectual honesty, according to the principle: "slander shamelessly, something always sticks" (Ch. Wolff, *Ausführliche Nachricht von seinen eigenen Schrifften*, Frankfurt, 1726, p. 172).

In its review of the *Theses de atheismo,* the *Journal des sçavans* seems to have agreed with Wolff: "He [Buddeus] is committed to finding out how far the schools of philosophy were ungodly rather than demonstrating the contrary" (JS, LXI, 1717, part 1, p. 320). His definition of atheism is so wide that no philosophical system is free from it, except for Platonism, as Antonio Valsecchi, Dominican, professor of theology at the University of Padua, observes: "In his *Treatise on atheism and superstition*, Franz Buddeus protests indeed that he is not of that strange humour that would make him force someone to become an atheist; yet I believe that anyone who reads his work will easily discover that it is not exempt from that humour, seeing that he makes use of such criteria and works on such principles, by virtue of which perhaps few philosophers can be considered free from atheism" (Valsecchi, *De' fondamenti della religione*, pp. 18–19).

In contrast to these negative opinions, there were some more favourable assessments, such as that of J. Le Clerc, who praised the *Introductio ad historiam philosophiae Ebraeorum*, although he did not share its defence of the Cabbala because of the eclectic spirit that inspired it: "As the author is among those who follow eclectic philosophy, that is to say those who choose the best from all the schools, he approves and disapproves of what he finds good or bad in the philosophy of the Hebrews with a freedom that cannot be denied to any philosopher" (BCh, VII, 1705, p. 361). Dorn, who describes Buddeus as *Praeceptor noster venerandus* describes the master's historiographical work in Jonsius's Jena edition of the *De scriptoribus* (pp. 204–206) in this note: "He published so many excellent books, with which he increased the range of the history of philosophy in such a way that no one who is interested in studying wisdom more thoroughly can ignore them" (Jonsius, p. 205). By the time the *Compendium* was republished in 1731, scholars in Germany could use manuals that were livelier and more complete, such as those by Reinhard and Gentzken, who had taken and developed the contents of the *Succincta delineatio*; in spite of this, the *Acta eruditorum* welcomed the new edition of Buddeus' work with interest: "We should thank J.G. Walchius for publishing this *Historiae philosophicae compendium*. The author adds in the notes numerous things that deserve to be read; their excellence will easily impress anyone sufficiently well-versed in this sort of literature" (NAE, 1732, p. 40).

The influence of Buddeus's writings in Italy can be seen in particular in exponents of Neapolitan culture. Genovesi made much use of the *Compendium*, the *Introductio ad historiam philosophiae Ebraeorum*, and the *Theses de atheismo* (cf. Chapter 4, Introduction; Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica*, pp. 385–405). Capasso's *Synopsis* was directly inspired by the *Historiae philosophicae succincta delineatio*, as the author appreciated the eclectic method of the German historian and sought to imitate it (cf. Chapter 4, para 4.5).

Buddeus's importance in the historiography of philosophy can be deduced, not just from the republishing and circulation of his works, but even more from the success of his teaching and from its effect as an incentive that prompted a large number

of scholars to study the history of philosophy. It was he who motivated Syrbius and Walch, known particularly as historians of logic; Jakob Brucker, who attended his lectures at Jena and became a friend of his brother, Carl Friedrich Buddeus, referred explicitly to his writings and teaching: "We recognise with gratitude that we owe much to this man who was the first to bring light to this kind of history, and whose example, teaching, and authority, together with the friendship and studies of his brother directed towards this sort of learning, have encouraged us in a wonderful way to undertake this career and to pursue it with enthusiasm" (Brucker, V, p. 529). And in fact, Brucker's historical writing was to be strongly influenced by Buddeus's university teaching. The focus on systems which, as Walch noted, distinguished Buddeus's historiography from that of his predecessors, was also to form one of the fundamental rules of the *Historia critica*. Despite some differences of interpretation, the plan of the *Compendium* and its division into periods was to be taken up and developed by Brucker; in particular there is an analogy with Buddeus's division and arrangement into systems of modern thought, with both historians placing the representatives of eclecticism at the summit: "And it is extremely significant that the very direction and the historical information of the *Encyclopédie* should depend – through the mediation of Brucker – precisely on this author, preoccupied as he always was to remain faithful to the character of orthodox religion. Through the reading of his texts, destined to have greater resonance than Thomasius's writings, and received in the same Catholic theological circles, the most significant features of 18th-century Lutheran culture and that of the early Enlightenment were to be filtered through to, and assimilated by, the most illustrious exponents of the new European culture" (Masi, "Eclettismo e storia della filosofia", p. 209).

The history of philosophy was not the main occupation of Buddeus who, as we know, was for a long time professor of theology at Jena. However, his work in this field was extremely effective in arousing in the cultural environment of the period a widespread interest in the history of philosophy, laying the foundation for the flowering and maturing of this genre of writing in eighteenth-century Germany.

5.5.7. On Buddeus's life: Niceron, XXI, pp. 30–35; "Elogium J. Francisci Buddei", AE, 1731, pp. 245–248; "Mémoire abrégé sur la vie et les ouvrages de M. Buddeus", BG, XXII (1731), pp. 120–134; G.V. Hartmann, *Anleitung zur Historie der Leibnizisch-Wolffischen Philosophie* (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1737), pp. 91–98; Schmersahl, p. 218; Jöcher, I, cols. 1458–1459; BUAM, VIII, pp. 260–261; DSPh, I, pp. 394–395; ADB, III, pp. 500–501; NDB, II, p. 715; LThK, II, col. 752. List of his works in *Notitia dissertationum aliorumque scriptorum a J.F. Buddeo aut eius auspiciis editorum* (Jena, 1728); Heinsius, I, cols. 457–458; Gumposch, p. 258.

On Buddeus's philosophical and theological thought: H. Wuttke, *Christian Wolffs eigene Lebensbeschreibung* (Leipzig, 1841), pp. 30–31, 198–199; Ritschl, *Geschichte des Pietismus*, II, pp. 389–391; A.F. Stolzenburg, *Die Theologie des J.F. Buddeus und des Chr. M. Pfaff. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Aufklärung in Deutschland* (Berlin, 1926; facs. repr. Aalen, 1979); Wundt, pp. 63–75; Petersen, *Geschichte der aristotelischen Philosophie*, pp. 395, 406, 410; Wolff, *Die Weltanschauung der deutschen Aufklärung*, pp. 43–44, 138–140; E. Hirsch, *Geschichte der neueren evangelischen Theologie* (Güterloh, 1960), II, pp. 319–326,

329–335; Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica*, pp. 385–406; Schneiders, *Naturrecht und Liebesethik*, pp. 302, 317–318; P. Rétat, *Le dictionnaire de Bayle et la lutte philosophique au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1971), pp. 153–154; U. Leinsle, *Reformversuche protestantischer Metaphysik im Zeitalter des Rationalismus* (Augsburg, 1988); W. Sparn, "Auf dem Wege zur theologischen Aufklärung in Halle. Von Johann Franz Budde zu Sigmund Jakob Baumgarten", in *Zentren der Aufklärung I. Halle: Aufklärung und Pietismus*, ed. N. Hinske (Heidelberg, 1989), pp. 71–89; F. Nüssel, *Bund und Versöhnung. Zur Begründung der Dogmatik bei Johann Franz Buddeus* (Göttingen, 1996); F. Fabbianelli, "Leibniz, Budde et Wolff. Trois modèles de théodicée", *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger*, CXXVIII (2003), pp. 293–306. On his journalistic activity: Kirchner, *Das deutsche Zeitschriftenwesen*, I, pp. 35, 42.

Reviews of Buddeus's historical works examined here: on the *Theses de atheismo*: JS, LXI (1717), pp. 316–323; AE, 1716, pp. 549–558; NAE, 1740, pp. 169–176; on the *Elementa philosophiae instrumentalis*: AE, 1704, pp. 110–115; BCh, VII (1705), pp. 360–383; on the *Compendium historiae philosophiae*, NAE, 1732, pp. 40–47.

For the opinion of contemporaries on Buddeus's historiographical works: Jonsius, II, pp. 204–206; Stolle, pp. 424–425; Struve, I, pp. 158–159; Brucker, I, p. 38, and V, pp. 527–531; J.F. Reimmann, *Historia universalis atheismi et atheorum* (Hildesheim, 1725), p. 185; Ch. Wolff, *Ausführliche Nachricht von seinen eigenen Schriften* (Frankfurt, 1726), pp. 339–390; A. Valsecchi, *De' fondamenti della religione e de' fonti dell'empietà*, 2nd edn (Turin, 1770),Vol. II, pp. 18–20.

On Buddeus's works on history of philosophy: Freyer, p. 19; Stolzenburg, *Die Theologie des J.F. Buddeus,* pp. 53–89; Braun, pp. 97–100; E. Garin, "Compendi di storia della filosofia", *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia*, XXVIII (1973), pp. 89–91; Del Torre, p. 42; S. Masi, "Eclettismo e storia della filosofia in Johann Franz Budde", in *Memorie della Accademia delle Scienze di Torino*, II, Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche, Serie 5, Vol. I (Turin, 1977), pp. 164–212; M. Longo, "Natura e compiti della storia della filosofia in J.F. Budde", *Il Contributo*, V (1981), pp. 37–44; Id., *Historia philosophiae philosophica*, pp. 56–60; Blackwell, "Epicurus and Boyle", pp. 79, 82, 84–85, 87; M. Mulsow, "Gundling vs. Buddeus. Competing Models of the History of Philosophy", in *History and the Disciplines*, ed. D.R. Kelley, pp. 103–125; Varani, *Pensiero "alato" e modernità*, pp. 98–104, 172–179.

5.6 Jakob Friederich Reimmann (1668–1743)

Critisirender Geschichts-Kalender von der Logica

Francesco Bottin

5.6.1. Jakob Friederich Reimmann was born in Bröningen near Halberstadt in 1668. He studied philosophy and theology at Jena, and then became director of a school in Halberstadt. He continued to work in school teaching for many years as an inspector, always in his home town. However, he was also involved in religious

questions, becoming deacon in 1714 and then principal preacher at Halberstadt. Later he also held the position of superintendant of the churches at Hildesheim. His most important interests were in theology and the history of theological doctrines. In his writings he spoke of two noteworthy events in his life: Leibniz's visit in 1706 and the fire that in 1710 devastated his library, destroying not only many of his books but also some of his manuscripts. He died in Hildesheim in 1743.

5.6.2. The majority of Reimmann's works are on historical subjects, although he was also concerned with philosophical and theological questions, in his *Schediasma philosophicum de logices Aristotelicae, Rameae, Cartesianae et eclecticae insufficientia* (1697); S*pecilegium philosophicum de definitione unica demonstrationis potissimae* (1699); and *Idea compendii theologici* (Hildesheim, 1724).

The historical works are on secular history, the history of theology, history of literature and the history of philosophy. The *Conspectus historiae civilis* (1722), is on secular history; and the *Versuch einer Einleitung in die Historie der Theologie insgemein und der jüdischen Theologie insonderheit* (1717) concerns theological doctrines. A list of the author's most important works on history of literature comprises: *Poesis Germanorum canonica et apocrypha: bekannte und unbekannte Poesie der Teutschen* (1703); *Versuch einer Einleitung in die* historiam litterariam *sowohl insgemein als auch in die* historiam litterariam *der Teutschen insonderheit* (1708–1713); *Versuch einer Einleitung in die* historiam litterariam antediluvianam (1709); *Historia vocabulorum linguae latinae* (1718); and *Idea systematis antiquitatis litterariae* (1718).

The following works concern the history of philosophy: *Critisirender Geschichts-Calender von der Logica* (Frankfurt, 1699); *Historia universalis atheismi (*Hildesheim, 1725; this is similar to, and in part a re-writing of, the *Theses theologicae de atheismo* by J.F. Budde); and *Historia philosophiae Sinensis* (1727).

5.6.3. In the preface Reimmann set out to explain the very special character of his *Critisirender Geschichts-Kalender von der Logica*, declaring that he had felt the need to establish precisely the period in which any particular writer on logic lived and worked by means of a historical calendar, recording year by year all the important facts that related to logic. Further, he considered this very important for anyone who wished to understand the ups and downs of this discipline from the beginning of the world up to 1600 A.D. In fact, as Reimmann admitted, this way of compiling a *Bibliotheca scriptorum logicorum*, although it might boast illustrious antecedents in the ancient Roman compilation of the *Fasti* and also in the practice of some contemporary scholars of secular history, would appear to be very far from the literary obsessions of his own century. In this period even learned Germans (*das gelehrte Deutschland*) had become completely enslaved to the literary fashions of the French, who had taught them to change their literary tastes as easily as "the capricious fashion in clothes changes its designs".[20] This was why the art of writing

[20]Cfr. p. IV: "Wir schweben anitzo in einen Seculo da die Bücher nicht anders wie die Kleider nach der Mode wollen gemachet seyn und da sich die Scribenten so wohl als die Schneider nach der blossen *caprice* der Leute *accomodiren* müssen".

historical calendars had been up till now ignored, since by nature it was far removed from the frivolous and trivial fashions of a century which craved novelty and was scarcely interested in historical objectivity. In reality, Reimmann continued, keeping up the comparison with fashion in clothes, historical calendars are like pleated garments which hide many interesting new pieces of information under their dull and pedantic appearance. However, it was to be desired that they should come back into fashion even in a period that was so full of curiosity and yearning for new literary styles.

On the other hand, Reimmann pointed out, the history of logic is not at home within a general *historia litteraria* and is often treated in an unsatisfactory way. Hence his proposal to gather together all the *scriptores* of this specific discipline from the beginning of the world to the beginning of his own century, in such a way that from now onwards it would be possible to set each author in the right period with some precision and to discuss the school to which he belonged, his style, and his method *sine ira et studio*.

Hence Reimmann's intention in arranging the material in the form of a historical calender was to enable the impartial reader to gain a secure idea of the historical development of the subject, free from biased interpretation. He was aware of the difficulties that his plan might encounter, given the unreliability of the documents referring to the schools of philosophy of the past, and given the enormous numbers of writers on logic who had lived in the previous century (he declared that he had counted more than 200, but naturally he could not put them all in his *Historical Calendar*). But he felt that he had a vocation to what he called this "munus criticum" which was so strong that he was willing to admit possible errors. His only claim was to be able to affirm that in writing this book he was spurred on by no other motive than a love of historical truth.

5.6.4. *Critisirender Geschichts-Kalender von der Logica*

5.6.4.1. The Calender has 112 pages and consists of a preface addressed to the "kind reader" in which the author explains the purpose of the work, and the arrangement by year of important facts concerning logic and those engaged in its study. Under each year, arranged chronologically with a double system of numbering – from the origins of the world, and before or after the birth of Christ – the most varied things are recorded, but in general there is the name of an author, followed by the title of his most important books on logic, with some brief critical comments. Where possible, the year and place of publication of these works are given in a note. Other notes provide plenty of historical information about the authors. The choice of a particular year in the calendar for each author usually picks out the high point of the author's career, often coinciding with the year of publication of his most important work in the case of sixteenth and seventeenth century authors, while the dates of birth and death are omitted. The work concludes with an alphabetical index of the authors (about 180 names).

5.6.4.2. There is no real subdivision of the history of logic into periods, as the author goes through the years one by one from the beginning of the world, corresponding to 3947 B.C., up to the year 5549, corresponding to 1600 A.D. However, he gives brief

general characteristics of some historical periods which are then re-examined year by year. For example, he declares that "from the year 600 A.D. to the year 1100 the barbarianism of the Saracens ruled in Italy and Greece" (p. 28); then "from the year 1300 to the year 1350 literary production was dominated by Scholastic theology, and in that period we can find as many logicans as there are fish in the sea" (p. 38), though none of them was really interested in seeking the truth.

5.6.4.3. According to Reimmann, logic originated at the beginning of the world, since it enabled the first men to understand things clearly and to distinguish true from false. In fact the very first two creatures in the universe, Adam and Eve, immediately had to reckon with the *sophismata* of Satan: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil corresponds to the knowledge of good and evil in the human mind. In the same way, it can be argued that a real theological dispute *de extremo iudicio et statu animae post mortem* took place between Cain and Abel and that the latter paid with his life for his orthodoxy. However, this logic was the fruit of wisdom rather than of rational rules which, on the other hand, the Hebrews and Pythagoras learnt from the Egyptians and spread throughout the world. Thus logic became systematized into precise rules in the Greek schools, and above all in the teaching of Aristotle, and with him it became a true system. However, it should be noted that of the many books that Aristotle is said to have written (72–80) barely 15 or 16 have come down to us, so very probably whole works on logic were lost.

Reimmann places the eclectics at the beginning of the Christian era. They chose the following fine principle as their foundation: in the search for truth no special respect should be paid to anyone. On the other hand, many philosophers from 150 A.D. onwards regarded the pages of Aristotle's *Organon* as the words of the Sibyl and used logic as a way of studying pedantic and pointless questions. In fact, Reimmann recounts the various vicissitudes of Aristotle's works, such as the systematization carried out by Alexander of Aphrodisias, and Caracalla's decree of 213 A.D. which ordered that all of Aristotle's works should be burned, with the intention of minimizing the importance of Aristotle's logic.

The tendency to favour Aristotle's logic and to ask pedantic questions was to increase with the Scholastics, who turned the *Organon* into a series of rules and precepts that had very little to do with the search for truth. However, first with Lorenzo Valla and then, above all, with Petrus Ramus, scholars began to reject this *praejudicium auctoritatis*, with the result that men had to walk on their own two feet again. The figure of Philip Melancthon is particularly important in this process of renewing logic, and here Reimmann writes: "Just as we should grant him the honour not only of reforming the Churches but also of being the first to satisfy the needs of the public schools with a new logic, so we should not neglect to mention that he also reformed many pedantries in logic. In fact, he not only gave a new form to the rules that had been defiled by the uncouth words and sophistries of the realists, which he cleaned up with much effort, at the same time correcting the excesses and defects of logic by using Aristotle's middle way, but he also inflicted a decisive blow to the ridiculous examples given by the lazy Scholastics and replaced them by introducing the custom that the candidate should have before his eyes examples showing how

the above-mentioned rules of logic could be used elegantly in the most serious disciplines" (pp. 47–48). In the period following these writers, up to the year 1600, there was indeed a re-elaboration and continuous readjustment of these new forms of logic in the most varied fields so that they became ever clearer and more precise.

5.6.4.4. The particular nature of this book, designed as we have mentioned as a historical calendar, forced the author to restrict himself to an objective exposition of the facts relating to the history of logic, which hindered him from making any explicit personal interpretations. However, while never expressing a judgement on individual authors or on entire periods, he did not fail to make clear the points of contrast between different authors and different periods. He chose to express assessments indirectly, that is, by putting them in the mouths of other authors dealt with in the book. In this way Reimmann remained faithful to his undertaking to give a simple exposition of the authors, their works and actions, according to the criteria appropriate to polyhistory, while at the same time he allowed a glimpse of a certain overall design relating to the various high and low points in the history of logic. The main outlines of this design are given by the fate of Aristotle's *Organon* which was immediately adopted by many logicians almost as a sacred text and was then, in the Middle Ages, confused with theological questions, finally exhausting itself in sterile and pointless arguments. Subsequently, thanks to the Humanists, logic became once more a discipline concerned with real problems and it could therefore be used profitably again in many disciplines. The author added to this main plan of the development of logic moreover by describing numerous minor logicians, treated on the same level as the more important ones, following the eclectic principle of granting no particular respect to anyone but always being ready to search for truth wherever it might be found.

5.6.5. While not particularly original in its historiographical ideas, Reimmann's book circulated widely as a useful bibliography of authors and books. In fact, although he gave an early example of his historical methodology in his history of literature rather than in his history of philosophy, his historical calendar was greatly appreciated by later historians, who drew much material from it. For example, both G. Stolle and J.G. Walch spoke favourably of the work. The former commended the author for not restricting himself to a bare list of authors and works, declaring that in the book "the growth and decline of the discipline is shown [. . .] an opinion on the writers is given in an orderly and thoughtful way" (Stolle, p. 573). Walch used it frequently in his vast history of logic, not only as a rich source of information, but he also took up its main historical idea, that is, that the task of the historian is to seek the causes of the periods of prosperity and decline that logic has experienced over the centuries.

5.6.6. Cf. Stolle, p. 573; K. Prantl, in ADB, Vol. 27, pp. 716–717; Schröder, *Spinoza in der deutschen Frühaufklärung*, passim; Blackwell, "Epicurus and Boyle", pp. 79, 83–84; *Skepsis, Providenz, Polyhistorie. Jakob Friedrich Reimmann (1668–1743)*, eds. M. Mulsow and H. Zedelmaier (Tübingen, 1998); Zedelmaier, *Der Anfang der Geschichte*, pp. 61–63.

5.7 Johann Jakob Syrbius (1674–1738)

Historia Logicae

Francesco Bottin

5.7.1. Johann Jakob Syrbius was born in Wegmar in Thuringia in 1674; he studied at the university of Jena, where he obtained a doctorate in philosophy in 1696. In 1707 he became Professor of Logic and Metaphysics at Jena, and after a brief period as director of the Theological Seminary at Eisenach he returned to Jena as Professor of Theology and remained there until his death in 1738. He took a leading part in the dispute against Ch. Wolff in line with the austere position taken by the Pietists and by his teacher J.F. Budde.

5.7.2. The list of his works includes a large number of dissertations on various cultural subjects; the following are the most important: *Dissertatio de cultu Bacchi inter Gentiles* (Jena, 1698); *Dissertatio de sabbato gentili* (1699); *Dissertatio de auctoritate scripturae sacrae inter Gentiles* (1706); *Dissertatio de desiderio hominis infinito* (1726); *Dissertatio de tenenda fidei christianae professione* (1730); *Dissertatio de Pauli in urbem Romam ingressu* (1731).

Other dissertations on more specifically philosophical subjects are: the *Dissertatio de numero et serie categoriarum* (1699); the *Dissertatio de origine Atheismi* (1720); and the *Epistola [. . .] de methodo humanioris doctrinae* (1703). The following philosophical works show a more systematic involvement in the subject: *Programma de definitione sapientiae* (Jena, 1707); *Synopsis philosophiae rationalis* (1716) (this work came out in 1717 under the title *Institutiones philosophiae rationalis eclecticae* and was republished under the same title in 1723); *Synopsis philosophiae primae* (1716); *Conspectus philosophiae rationalis eclecticae* (1717); *Kurze Anweisung zur Weisheit und allen dahin unmittelbar gehörigen Wissenschaften* (1724); *Bericht wegen der Wolf'schen Philosophie* (1725); *Vierundzwanzig Punkte, die Syrbius an der Wolf'schen Philosophie hatte* (1727); and *Dissertatio de determinata futurorum contingentium veritate* (1738). In the preface to the *Institutiones philosophiae rationalis eclecticae* is the *Historia logicae succincte delineata*, which will be examined in detail using the 1723 edition.

5.7.3. In the *Historia Logicae* Syrbius's intention is to explain in writing the *ratio* of his oral teaching of logic which should, in his opinion, be closely related to the *eclectica philosophandi ratio*. Indeed, for him eclectic philosophy is "a better kind of philosophy and in some way its fulfillment, and in a certain sense is required by necessity" (*Hist. log.*, p. VI). Precisely because this philosophical attitude involves a choice between the various ways of presenting philosophy, which in reality depend on the point of view of the different schools, Syrbius declares that he has considered it appropriate "to see which are the better writers to be considered, not from one school only, as the sectarians do, but from schools of every kind, [. . .] so that I may be able to retain the things that are more truthful and more useful" (p. vii). This explicit stance gives the brief summary of the history of logic an intentionally objective and impartial character, and this impartiality is further secured by means

of a rigorous division into periods, with a whole series of internal sub-divisions, the purpose of which is precisely to give the history of logic a framework free, as far as possible, from biased interpretations.

5.7.4. *Historia logicae*

5.7.4.1. The *Historia logicae*, as we have said, is a 62-page preface in 16° to a much larger work. After a *conspectus* which gives an index of the subjects covered, the *praefatio* is subdivided into 52 paragraphs, the first offering various observations on the purpose of the work and the method followed. Brief notes support the various themes discussed and indicate the sources.

5.7.4.2. The author gives the main purpose of his treatise as "dividing the history of logic into definite periods" in order to make the different forms of logic used over the centuries more accessible. Thus he subdivides the history of logic into eight periods as follows: (1) the period of *logica naturalis*, before men had discovered any rule of logic; (2) the period of *logica utens* or *praxis logica* in which philosophers, physicists, and mathematicians made use of logical procedures without having drawn them up explicitly; (3) the period of *logica artificialis* in which the *prima rudimenta* of logic were defined; (4) the period of Plato, Aristotle, Zeno and Epicurus; (5) the period of the logic of the philosophical schools; (6) the period of barbarian or medieval logic; (7) the period of *logica reformata* which managed to rise from the new *philosophia rationalis*; (8) and finally the period of *logica eclectica*. Many of these periods are subdivided in turn, either chronologically or by subject. The subdivision of "barbarian logic" into three *aetates* is particularly interesting, in that it was to be echoed, unaltered, by J.G. Walch: (1) from Peter Lombard to Albertus Magnus; (2) from Albertus Magnus to Durandus of Saint-Pourçain; (3) and from Durandus of Saint-Pourçain to Gabriel Biel.

5.7.4.3. Although Syrbius's account is strictly arranged according to periods, the author does not in general give much space to an assessment of each period. He does not forget, however, if only in passing, to pass an unfavourable judgement on Stoic logic ("if everything subtle were also useful, and if making things difficult were the same as philosophizing, the logic of the Stoics would be second to none": p. xxvii) and Scholastic logic ("a certain horrible form of barbarism that corrupted the whole of philosophy, and thus logic too": p. xxxi) while extolling *logica reformata*. Syrbius believes that the origin of the new *philosophia naturalis* and the new logic can be found in Raymond Lull, thus destroying the correlation he had established between the various periods of the development of logic and the chronological order. The new logic was to find strong supporters in Lorenzo Valla, Juan Luis Vives, Peter Ramus, Mario Nizolio, and others, who would undertake to set ancient logic free from the aberrations of the Scholastics. In fact, according to Syrbius, this intention should be the guiding criterion for recognizing *logica reformata*: "All of these people can be described to some extent as the class of reformers; they had the idea of cleansing logic from the sources of antiquity, embellishing and restoring it; they flourished either in the same period as the reformers just mentioned, or before, or in some cases after them" (pp. lxv–lxvi).

Finally, the most recent period, that of *logica eclectica*, has Francis Bacon as its founder and René Descartes as its most systematic and thorough exponent. A great reflowering of logic followed on from them, which can be briefly summarised into currents or *classes*, according to the various interests of those who used it: (a) the class of mathematicians, who used logic with geometrical, arithmetical, and algebraic principles; (b) the class of those who studied the faculties of the human intellect; and (c) many scholars who applied the rules of logic to the most varied disciplines.

5.7.4.4. Syrbius at times disregards the intention expressed at the beginning of the treatise, to provide a framework, as complete and precise as possible, to the history of logic, because he inserts opinions that had to be justified independently of the chronological order. Thus, the concept of *periodus*, at first purely chronological and hence neutral, is then used to introduce a general assessment of a certain type of logic, which involves tracking down precursors and preliminary events in other historical periods too. In the end, therefore, the chronological boundaries to each period are no longer observed. Naturally, all of this can be seen more clearly in the treatment of *logica reformata*. However, in the treatise in its entirety, while Syrbius makes full use of Gassendi's *De origine et varietate logicae*, Stanley's *Historia philosophiae*, and Horn's *Historia philosophica*, he offers a complete and clear panorama of the development of logic, which he tries as far as possible to keep on the level of an objective description.

5.7.5. P. Tschackert, in ADB, Vol. 37, pp. 290–291; Blackwell, "Epicurus and Boyle", pp. 80–82, 84, 86.

5.8 Johann Georg Walch (1693–1775)

Historia logicae

Francesco Bottin

5.8.1. Johann Georg Walch was born in Meinungen in 1693. He studied at the University of Leipzig, where his teachers included Karl Otto Reschenberg and Gottfried Olearius. He graduated in theology. He was appointed to teach Ancient History and Philology at Jena, and then Theology in the same city, where he was to hold the chair of the same subject from 1730 until his death in 1775. He married the only daughter of Johann Franz Budde (Buddeus) whose teaching had a profound influence on his theological and historico-philosophical studies. His involvement in the area of theology and religion is also demonstrated by the monumental edition of the works of Luther in 24 volumes that came out under his editorship from 1740 to 1750.

5.8.2. His works can be divided into the philological, the theological, and the philosophical. In the area of philology there is his *Historia critica Latinae linguae* (Leipzig, 1716) in eight volumes, reprinted several times.

He produced numerous books on religion and theology: *Historische und theologische Einleitung in die Religions-Streitigkeiten ausserhalb der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche* (Jena, 1724), in five volumes; *Historische und theologische Einleitung in die Religions-Streitigkeiten der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche, von der Reformation an bis jetzige Zeiten ausgeführt* (Jena, 1730), in five volumes; *Introductio in libros ecclesiae Lutheranae symbolicos observationibus historicis et theologicis illustrata* (Jena, 1732); *Einleitung in die theologischen Wissenschaften, Vorbereitungsgründe der allgemeine göttlichen Rechts-gelehrsamkeit der dogmatischen Theologie, der polemischen Theologie, der christlichen Sittenlehre und der Kirchenhistorie des neuen Testaments* (1733–1753); *Betrachtungen über das Leben Jesu Christi, in denen man die Schriften der vier Evangelisten erklärt, die Uebereinstimmung ihrer Erzählung gezeiget [. . .] mit Anmerkungen erläutert* (1740); *Einleitung in die christliche Moral* (1747); *Theologische Bedenken von der Beschaffenheit der herrnhutischen Secte und wie sich ein Landesherr in Ansehung derselbigen zu verhalten* (1747); *Einleitung in die dogmatische Gotteslehrtheit* (1749); *Historia controversiae Graecorum Latinorumque de processione Spiritus Sancti* (1751); *Einleitung in die polemische Gotteslehrtheit* (1752); *Bibliotheca theologica selecta litterariis adnotationibus instructa* (1757); and the *Bibliotheca patristica litterariis adnotationibus instructa* (1770).

In the field of philosophy are the following: *Parerga academica ex historiarum atque antiquitatum monimentis collecta* (Leipzig, 1721), the *Einleitung in die Philosophie* (1727), also in a Latin translation with the title *Introductio in philosophiam* (1730), and the *Philosophisches Lexikon* (1729). Walch's work more specifically on the history of philosophy can be found, in addition to various entries in the *Philosophisches Lexikon*, in the *Einleitung in die Philosophie*, and particularly in various works that make up the *Parerga academica*. Among these the most important are the *Exercitatio historico-philosophica de Atheismo Aristotelis* and the *Historia logicae*.

5.8.3. Walch presents a clear example of the application of Buddeus's historical ideas to a particular area of philosophy, that is, the history of logic. By its very nature, logic makes it possible to identify those themes which are most in keeping with the general historiographical attitude of the cultural milieu that came to an end with Buddeus. In fact, Walch declared that in the history of logic it was even easier to show the importance of the *origo, progressus, fata prospera* and *adversa* of philosophy in relation to that *libertas cogitandi* of which the *reformatio* was the finest example. To achieve this end, it was not necessary simply to give a list of those who wrote on logic and their works, but rather it was essential to set out the *ratio* of the discipline itself and the logical systems. In addition, and more generally, he asserted: "We disagree entirely with the ways and methods of those who, having decided to relate the history of philosophical disciplines, seem to think that their work is done when they have described at great length the writers of the times and their works, while they leave their doctrines untouched, doctrines with which they have sometimes honoured and sometimes corrupted the discipline" (*Hist. log*., p. 457). Nonetheless, he did not think that it was pointless to write a history of

logic, seeing that all those who had previously been engaged in this discipline had collected a large amount of material which, however, needed to be carefully sorted out. So Walch declared that apart from listing authors and works of logic, his main aim was "to expound the progress and fortune of logic through the various ages, in order to relate what the philosophers taught on this matter, and also to show the care with which they themselves practised the art of thinking and true liberty" (p. 459). Thus, the great value of the history of logic, apart from what it shares with *historia philosophica*, that is "to bring to us the clearest light [. . .] so that by it we can consider the fate of wisdom and human foolishness, the foundations of the opinions of the philosophers, the correct period in which they spoke them, the causes of heresies, and other things" (p. 458), consists, as we have seen, in enabling us to distinguish clearly those who exercised freedom of thought from those who have been enslaved to some authority of other. Hence, on the basis of the above-mentioned criterion, it will be easy to recognize why logic "was sometimes used in favourable circumstances, sometimes in adverse circumstances", that is, it will be possible to establish a direct connection between a "perverse attitude" and "extraordinary devotion to authority" and the worst moments in the history of logic (p. 459).

In this task of discernment and objective criticism the historian cannot believe any criticism other than that of the eclectic philosophers, according to whom we should declare with conviction that "a philosopher has acted badly when, having put aside all the others, he has restricted his attention to one single doctrine as the only true one" (*Philosophisches Lexicon*, p. 834). In fact, Walch declared, "Eclectic philosophy is the name given to the way of doing philosophy in which one uses the principles and conclusions of one's predecessors, that is to say that with one's capacity for judgement one selects truths from them whether these may be certain or only probable; these truths come to be accepted so intensely that they become assimilated to one's own thinking [. . .]. This way of doing philosophy is much to be preferred to the philosophy of the schools, since the scholar is then in a position to philosophize according to the truth, that is, he uses his own judgement and through it becomes convinced of the truths already found by others; on the other hand, by following the method of the schools, one falls into servitude and loses all freedom of thought" (*Philos. Lexicon*, p. 835).

Thus for Walch eclectic philosophy consisted of two closely connected elements: recovery of the teachings of the past independently of those who professed them, and the rational examination of these teachings through correct judgement. Now, since correct judgement is provided only by logic, it is easy to understand the importance assigned to this discipline in eighteenth-century German eclectic philosophy. Even the deep interest in the history of logic that we have proposed to record in these notes, depends directly on the need to establish an ever better and more correct criterion of rational judgement, in fact that of eclectic philosophy.

5.8.4. *Historia logicae*

5.8.4.1. The *Historia logicae* is the seventh section of the *Parerga academica*, from p. 453 to p. 848; it is preceded by the interesting *Prolegomena* and is sub-divided into three books. In the *Prolegomena* the author not only explains the purpose and

method of the work, but also provides a complete bibliography of the history of logic, giving first a list of general works, and secondly a list of works on particular questions or specific areas of the history of logic. The three books into which the work is divided deal, respectively, with the origin ("De origine artis logicae"), the progress ("De progressu ac fatis logicae") and the subsequent course ("De varia existimationis logicae fortuna") of logic.

5.8.4.2. After a discussion on the origin of logic, taking into consideration the forms of logic used by the barbarian peoples and the Ancient Greeks, Walch consistently follows a threefold division into: *tempore antiquo*, from Plato to the sixth century A.D.; *aetate media*, from the sixth century A.D. to the Renaissance; and *tempore recentiori*, from the Renaissance to Walch's own times. Walch suggests a further tripartite division within the medieval period, or rather, sub-divided the Scholastics into three shorter periods: from Roscellinus, or, more properly, from Peter Lombard to Albertus Magnus; from Albertus Magnus to Durandus of Saint-Pourçain; and from Durandus of Saint-Pourçain up to the Protestant Reformation. As can be seen, this is the sub-division proposed by Syrbius.

5.8.4.3. Even though Walch did not mention it specifically, his plan seems to have been influenced by a short book by Sebastian Edzardus published in Hamburg in 1717 with the explicit title *Quantum reformatio Lutheri profuerit logicae*. In fact, the whole structure of his work, from the sub-division into sections to the choice of the criteria of judgement, seems to have been oriented towards pointing out the importance of the Protestant Reformation in the development of the study of logic.

In Walch's plan, the choice of a two-fold procedure, by authors and by questions, was meant to show how the *libertas cogitandi*, namely the emancipation from *auctoritates*, constitutes the one valid criterion for establishing the progress of logic. In fact, he declares, the simple listing of authors and works would never be able to provide an exhaustive picture of the things that have happened to logic over the centuries. Therefore, some fundamental teachings have to be examined precisely in order to extract a general criterion of appraisal from the way in which they have been treated by various authors in different historical periods. For example, treatment of the doctrine of the human intellect is of fundamental importance for clarifying the different possible opinions held regarding man's rational capacities. In fact, it has often happened that because philosophers have been too much in thrall to *auctoritates* they have been unable to reach the truth. In particular, the Scholastics, too busy venerating Aristotle and too obedient to the Roman Church, "corrupted true and genuine philosophy, [...] indeed, they even proscribed it and filled their hearts and minds with trifles, rubbish and foolishness" (pp. 589–590). The choice of Aristotle as their *perpetuus dictator philosophiae* and as *Papa ecclesiae philosophicae*, together with their "blind devotion to the Roman pontiff", which meant that they put forward as authentic truth "whatever the convenience and ambition of the Pope might demand" (pp. 590–591) resulted in the Scholastic doctors' loss of all freedom of thought.

In the Middle Ages, therefore, although many people dedicated themselves to studying it, logic approached the lowest point in its history. In fact, as Walch was quick to say, "the good fortune of logic certainly does not depend only on studying

it or on the large number of people who have given themselves over to its study and have published books on it", but rather it depends on the fact that this discipline should be treated "according to its own nature", which means that it should indeed be directed towards the study of the true and the false (p. 832). In the Middle Ages the "perverse way of thinking" (p. 841) often hindered the Scholastics from perceiving the true purpose of logic or, at any rate, their subjugation to authority stopped them from having that "correct freedom of thought" without which it is "quite impossible to promote improvements in logic" (p. 843). Luther's reform established the "civil and ecclesiastical situation" (p. 833) that was the indispensable condition for the rise of philosophy to a new light ("[. . .] the muses of philosophy began to advance out of darkness into the light": p. 603; "a new light of philosophy arose": p. 778), and logic, in particular, "was freed from the trivialities of the Scholastics" (p. 837).

From that time onwards, there were numerous logicians who worked to free logic from every kind of servitude. Francis Bacon was the first to show the "new method of logic" (p. 369) that would then be developed by many other logicians and would lay the foundations for *logica eclectica*, the only form that can guarantee the *libertas cogitandi* which is indispensible for its progress.

5.8.4.4. As we have seen, Walch explicitly distanced himself from those who made their historical account consist of a careful list of authors and books. In effect, he maintained that an exposition of the most important teachings on logic through the centuries could clarify the relationship between *libertas cogitandi* and progress in logic. To this end, the following subjects were discussed at some length: the nature, definition, and parts of logic, the nature of the human intellect, the principles and criteria of truth, the origin and nature of ideas, various types of reasoning and demonstration, and problems relative to the scientific method.

In discussing these questions of logic, it is easier to recognize, when comparing them with other philosophical questions, those people who have made use of *libertas philosophica*. In fact, it is only through a correct solution to the problems inherent in logic that it is possible to cultivate in man that "correct reason or ability to think well", which is the sure way to reach "true freedom of thought" (p. 723). The results obtained from the inquiry into the authors and their teachings are presented in the two final chapters, concerned with matters of judgement and the *fortuna adversa et prospera* of logic. In this way the original plan, to observe the reasons why logic experienced moments at times fortunate and at times unfortunate, is brought rigorously to its conclusion.

5.8.5. J.G. Walch's history of logic can be considered, in view of the vastness of the subject matter and the thoroughness of the ideas maintained and opinions expressed, as the first example of a new historical genre that was to develop considerably in the following centuries until it became more or less independent of the general historiography of philosophy.

The *Parerga academica* was reviewed very favourably in the *Acta Eruditorum*, and, referring to the *Historia logicae*, the reviewer commented on both the size of the work and the originality of the opinions expressed in it: "After this [i.e. the

De enthusiasmo veterum sophistarum atque oratorum], we observe that the *Historia logicae* is written with such extraordinary accuracy that it includes all the documents on this subject. The work is in fact divided into three books: the first is on the origin of the art of logic; the second is on its progress and the things that happened to it, since the work is not only about writings on logic but also gives a full account of events that affected it. The third book deals with the varying attitudes towards evaluation of logic. If this famous author should in the future write a history of the other philosophical disciplines in the same fashion, we would expect to have a more complete and accurate history of philosophy" (AE, 1723, pp. 197–198).

Antonio Genovesi, on the other hand, expressed his perplexity over the treatment of *logica Adamitica*, forgetting that Walch himself had declared that one cannot speak of any evidence of logic in this period: "The learned man collects even the smallest pieces of information with great diligence. We have collected a few, enough for beginners. There is a very old custom of literary men, who, when they seek the origin of any discipline, begin with Adam, a custom elegantly called 'the conceit of nations' by our philosopher Vico (Book 1 *Scientiae novae*). You can hear 'Adamite logic' mentioned everywhere, and also things that refer to it, since Adam was endowed by God with great wisdom. There is no doubt that he could have made great use of reason and could have been an excellent logician. But whether Adam taught his descendants the rules of correct reasoning and the rules he had collected for inquiring into the facts of nature, it is true that we do not know. This indeed is the discipline whose origin we seek, a discipline consisting of rules handed down in a set form" (cf. A. Genovesi, *Elementorum artis logico-criticae libri V*, Venetiis, 1732, p. 5).

5.8.6. On Walch's life: P. Tschackert, in ADB, XL, pp. 650–652. On his ideas: Merker, *L'illuminismo tedesco*, p. 188; Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica di Antonio Genovesi*, pp. 74–75, 90–93, 383–404; Wundt, pp. 89, 112; Gumposch, p. 223; Wollgast, *Vergessene und Verkannte*, pp. 72, 75, 233, 237; D. von Wille, *Lessico filosofico della* Frühaufklärung*: Christian Thomasius, Christian Wolff, Johann Georg Walch* (Rome, 1991); C. Schmitt, "Walch, Johann Georg", in *Biographisch-bibliographisches Kirchenlexicon*, ed. W. Bautz (Hamm, 1998), Vol. XIII, cols 183–186. On his activity as a publicist: Kirchner, *Geschichte des deutschen Zeitschriftenwesens*, Vol. 1, pp. 40, 43. On the *Philosophisches Lexikon*: W. Killy, *Grosse deutsche Lexika und ihre Lexikographen (1711–1835)* (München – Leipzig – London – New York – Paris, 1993).

On the reception of the *Historia logicae*: Struve, I, p. 261; Stolle, pp. 572–573; Brucker, V, p. 545; Schmersahl, pp. 12–13, 239–240. On the history of philosophy in Walch: E. Feldmann, "Die Geschichte der Philosophie in Kant's Vorlesungen", *Philosophisches Jahrbuch*, 49 (1936), pp. 180, 182–183 and *passim*; Schröder, *Spinoza in der deutschen Frühaufklärung*, pp. 156–158 and *passim*; Blackwell, "Epicurus and Boyle", pp. 80–82, 85, 91; E. Canone, "I lessici filosofici latini del Seicento", pp. 97, 105; Catana, *The Historiographical Concept "System of Philosophy"*, pp. 154–156, 158, 160, 186, 188–189; Varani, *Pensiero "alato" e modernità*, pp. 313–316.

Chapter 6
The Theory of "Historia Philosophica"

Mario Longo

Introduction

In the early decades of the eighteenth century a new sector appeared in the panorama of writings concerned with philosophical historiography; in subsequent years and up to our present day, this was destined to acquire ever greater significance and to take a leading role in historiographical production itself. It consisted of works devoted to the theoretical problems of the history of philosophy; first came Ephraim Gerhard's *Introductio praeliminaris in historiam philosophicam*, and Christoph August Heumann's "Einleitung zur historia philosophica", the first part of his *Acta philosophorum*. To these we can add various dissertations by Christian Breithaupt, Joh. Nicolaus Sinnhold, and Joh. Christian Boehm which address particular questions of historiographical theory.[1]

This phenomenon can be understood in various ways and can be seen as the emergence of a completely new attitude towards the history of philosophy which, in the writings of Gerhard and Heumann, begins to appear a more self-conscious and autonomous discipline, or as a continuation of themes that had to a great extent already been taken up in the previous century.[2] Seventeenth-century historians of

M. Longo (✉)
Università di Verona, Dipartimento di Filosofia, Pedagogia e Psicologia, Lungadige Porta Vittoria 17, 37132 Verona, Italy
e-mail: mario.longo@univr.it

[1] Cf. Geldsetzer, *Die Philosophie der Philosophiegeschichte*, p. 16; Braun, pp. 100–104; Del Torre, pp. 65–68.

[2] The first interpretation is given by Braun: "Heumann représente pour nous le moment où l'histoire de la philosophie entreprend de s'interroger sur son propre concept, et de se séparer d'une pratique sans conscience. Avec lui s'opère la transformation décisive indiquée par les questions: qu-est-ce que l'histoire de la philosophie, quels sont ses éléments constitutifs, comment expliquer le devenir de la philosophie, quel est l'intéret d'une telle étude? Cette interrogation arrache un savoir-faire millénaire à sa somnolence en le contraignant à définir d'avance son champ d'exercice et ses principes de validité" (Braun, p. 100). E. Garin, on the other hand, denies that the position of "modest Heumann" was something new, and traces the discussion of the concept of history of philosophy back to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries with the Humanist rediscovery of the past; see below, note 25.

G. Piaia, G. Santinello (eds.), *Models of the History of Philosophy*, International Archives of the History of Ideas, Archives internationales d'histoire des idées,
DOI 10.1007/978-90-481-9507-7_6, © Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2011

philosophy, such as Stanley and Horn (cf. *Models*, I, pp. 173–176, 237–241), had undoubtedly raised some fundamental theoretical questions regarding the history of philosophy in the prefaces to their books, in an effort to clarify the nature of their own work and to distinguish it from earlier historiography. Towards the middle of the century, Jonsius's *De scriptoribus historiae philosophicae* showed not only the historical interest of a discipline that was in practice already formed, but also a desire to arrive at a definition of the genre and to give it a precise place in the system of the historical sciences.

The writings of Gerhard and Heumann, however, are not simply a continuation of this attitude. The question of the "history of philosophy" was now taken up in its theoretical implications without being immediately and necessarily put into practice in an actual work on the history of philosophy. The autonomy of historiographical theory with regard to practice is by no means a secondary result in the history of modern philosophical culture, if we bear in the mind the developments that this approach has produced in times closer to our own.

It is Heumann above all who deserves credit for having spelt out the themes of this new discipline: the end and the purpose of *historia philosophica*, its relation to other disciplines, the definition of philosophy and the concept of the history of philosophy, the division into periods, and questions concerning the historical method. Discussion of these points was taken up by Brucker and dealt with again at the end of the century by Fülleborn in the cultural climate of Kantianism; Hegel's historiographical theory discussed the same themes.[3]

The emergence of theoretical questions linked to the nature of the history of philosophy is not a separate episode independent of the philosophical culture of the period, but can be traced back to the urgent questions that had their origin in the philosophical and critical perspective opened up by Ch. Thomasius in Germany. In the previous chapter we have pointed out the contribution made by this current to the development of philosophical historiography. The concept of philosophy as *philosophia eclectica*, the free exercise of reason, and the critical approach to questions raised by experience and hence also by historical experience, was reflected in the very concept of the history of philosophy, which was given a function that was not purely erudite but was directly involved in philosophical research.

The eclectic philosopher cannot fail to consider the history of philosophy, but the historian of philosophy in turn can carry out his work thoroughly only if he is an eclectic, because only an eclectic possesses a criterion of evaluation, "sound reason", with which to define the real value of philosophical systems. This connection between philosophy and the history of philosophy, already considered by Buddeus,

[3]We find the same themes in Hegel, except for that of usefulness, which he considered to be suficiently clear; cf. the paragraph headings in the "Introduction to the History of Philosophy", in G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, trans. by E.S. Haldane (London, 1892–1896), Vol. I, pp. 7–116: "A. Notion of the History of Philosophy"; "B. The Relation of Philosophy to other Departments of Knowledge: 1. The Historical side of this Connection, 2. Separation of Philosophy from other allied Departments of Knowledge, 3. Commencement of Philosophy and its History"; "C. Division, Sources, and Method adopted in treating of the History of Philosophy".

makes the genre "history of philosophy" philosophically relevant and opens up new horizons to historiographical research. There emerges, for example, the question of judgement, obviously formulated in philosophical terms; it grasps the foundations (*die Gründe*) of systems, as intended by Heumann, who more than any other worked to make the history of philosophy a philosophical discipline: *historia philosophica* in the fullest sense of the expression, in which philosophy becomes the fundamental attribute and guiding criterion of the history of philosophy and not merely the subject being studied.

The philosophical emphasis assumed by the history of philosophy in the eclectic perspective is reflected in the need to acquire a theoretical foundation of its own. The history of philosophy is not only concerned with questions of historical method and with the questions common to other historical sciences, but also has to take into account philosophy, for it is an integral part of its method. This insight implies a diversification and a break with earlier historiography, something noted in particular by Heumann, who grasped very clearly the new tasks assigned to the history of philosophy by the philosophical culture of his own time.

If, as Heumann put it, Hornius, Stanley, and Vossius were philologists rather than philosophers, the new historians of philosophy would have to be first of all philosophers, that is, they should not be afraid to make judgements, to approve or reject, and to examine their own theoretical positions thoroughly by means of historical analysis. For Heumann, the work of the philologist, to trace and accurately read the sources and carry out a rigorous historical reconstruction, is not to be despised; but it must be oriented towards a reading of philosophy's past in philosophical terms. The autonomy and the specific nature of philosophical historiography in relation to other historical sciences is strongly emphasized, whether it is concerned with content, which presents not only facts, events, and actions, but also, more importantly, opinions, teachings, and systems, or whether it is concerned with method, which is a matter not only of verifying historical truth but also evaluating and selecting.

The first problem to be solved concerned the usefulness of the history of philosophy, both in the education of the individual and in relation to other disciplines. This is the problem addressed by Gerhard's work, which analytically examines the contribution made by philosophical historiography to the study of theology, jurisprudence, medicine, and philosophy. The choice of sciences with which to compare the history of philosophy is not fortuitous, but reflects a precise cultural and historical situation, and the division of university teaching into four faculties.

The themes discussed by Gerhard were raised again some years later by Christian Breithaupt (1689–1749) in an introductory *Programma* to a course on the history of philosophy advertised to take place in Helmstädt in the summer session of 1718: *Aurea Jovis catena coelo demissa. H.E. Nexus historiae philosophicae cum superioribus disciplinis* (Helmstädt, 1718). The image of the chain of Zeus, taken from the story in Homer (*Iliad*, book VIII), is used to portray the link that unites all branches of human learning: "and just as a chain is formed of many links, different from one another and yet joined together, so human learning certainly has different parts, but they are so connected to one another that none of them can be correctly understood and explained without the others" (p. 3).

The history of philosophy is compared to the four fields of study, each corresponding to a faculty. It is used by the theologian "not only for interpreting Holy Scripture but also for identifying the origin of heresies" (p. 3). The student of law learns to recognise the authentic meaning of the laws, many of which still preserve the spirit of Stoicism: "Since numerous laws still exist in civil law that show the influence of the Portico, they should be interpreted according to the Stoic way of thinking" (p. 5). The doctor also discovers the origin of his art in the history of philosophy: "To seek and to consider the origin, the progress, and the various vicissitudes of the art of medicine certainly offers a significant aid to those who study it" (p. 6). The philosopher is naturally the person most interested in this history: "But what need is there to speak of this, seeing that it is self-evident?" (p. 7). The brief *Programma* concludes with a didactic note: the history of philosophy is an agreeable subject to study, "it commends itself by providing some pleasure and delight", but the student must approach it attentively and with commitment, and must get to the very core of the subject (*ad ipsas disciplinas*), without spending too much time on the telling of facts (*in nuda gestarum narratione*), if he wants to obtain the greatest profit from it.

A similar work, though more specialised in that it examines the connections between the history of philosophy and religious themes, was written by the theologian Joh. Nic. Sinnhold: *Commentatio litteraria de usu historiae philosophicae in demonstranda Christianae religionis veritate* (Erfurt, 1723). Here too the book originated in a university course on the history of philosophy, and the subject of usefulness of this history is clearly emphasised: "While natural wisdom makes it possible to extend our understanding, the benefits that its history affords are equally numerous and excellent" (p. 5). In the context of the numerous benefits of philosophical historiography, Sinnhold concentrates on the religious aspect. There are very close links between the history of philosophy and religion, given the harmony that exists between philosophy and Christianity. This position is justified on both the theoretical and the historical level: on the former, Sinnhold accepts Leibniz' position, expressed in the *Théodicée*, that dogmas are beyond reason's capacity to understand but are not contradictory.[4]

The history of philosophy offers a historical proof of this harmony; the progress and corruption of philosophy have always been accompanied by an analogous movement in the history of the Church: "The Christian religion has had to endure the

[4]Leibniz justified this assertion by referring to the distinction between *truths of reason*, which are absolutely necessary while the opposite implies contradiction, and *positive truths* or truths of fact, the necessity of which is not geometric but moral in its nature: "The distinction usually made between what is above reason and what is contrary to reason fits very well with the distinction I have made between the two types of necessity. Indeed, what is against reason is against the absolutely sure and indispensable truths, and what is above reason is contrary only to what one is accustomed to testing or understanding. Therefore I am amazed that there are men of keen intellect who deny this distinction and that Mr. Bayle should be among them" (G.W. Leibniz, *Essais de Théodicée*. I. "Discours préliminaire de la conformité de la foi avec la raison", in Id., *Die philosophischen Schriften*, ed. C.I. Gerhardt, Vol. VI, § 23, p. 64).

crises and periods of decline suffered by philosophy; and our religion has been able to benefit from the same progress attained by natural understanding. Think of how many periods of decline and harm the Christian religion suffered in the centuries of barbarism when the stupid trivialities of Aristotelian Scholasticism dominated the Church; on the other hand, how many advantages did the Church of God obtain when philosophy began to take on a different appearance following the struggle of learned men against the yoke of Scholastic philosophy? Only a person who is totally ignorant of the past and present and is blinder than a bat will dare to deny this" (p. 7).

This analysis of the links between the history of philosophy and theology goes as far as to involve the very nature of religion, a very topical subject in Germany in the early eighteenth century: as we shall see, it was also discussed by Heumann, in his defence of the orthodox position against the writings of Tolland and Collins. In answer to the question posed by those philosophers who remained pagan after the coming of Christ, Sinnhold uses the same words as Heumann: "If we examine the behaviour of the philosophers, we realise that the main motive for their contempt of religion was their preconceived hatred of it, and the carelessness and neglect that followed from this; because of this they did not bother to examine the teaching of the Gospel, and were not able to discern in it the relation and order of the ways of God, a relation and order worthy of God" (p. 28).

Sinnhold's praise of the history of philosophy takes place in the third decade of the eighteenth century, by which time the subject had already established deep roots in German philosophical culture. These are the years in which the first writings of Brucker appear and in which famous textbooks such as those by Gentzken and Heineccius are published. This enthusiasm for learning was without doubt helped by the contribution of Heumann, who with his *Acta philosophorum* had created the first specialist journal on the history of philosophy. A proof of this widespread interest is another dissertation, read in Strasbourg on 29 September, 1732, on the subject of the decline and recovery of philosophical historiography, beginning with the Greeks: *De neglectae et excultae historiae philosophicae causis* (Strasbourg, 1732). Its author was Joh. Christian Boehm *sub praesidio* of Johann Jacob Witter (1697–1747), professor of logic and metaphysics at the University of Strasbourg. The dissertation was not intended to be a history of the writing of philosophical historiography, but simply aimed to indicate the facts that had held back, or promoted, interest in historiography. The barbarians were not interested in the history of philosophy, unlike the Greeks, "who were the first to put the history of philosophy into writing" (p. 8). During the Middle Ages there was a decline in scholarship and hence also in the history of philosophy, which was restored to new strength only with the Renaissance. The main cause of this recovery was the independent attitude towards the Ancients, that is, the freedom to philosophize and to make judgements: "Therefore we are laying a new foundation for the study of the history of philosophy, that is the freedom to philosophize that the restorers of learning lay claim to. They began to consider not the name of an author but the things that were said; they could be seen, like bees, flitting around the monuments of the ancient sages, sipping the best juices of their teachings, gathering the flowers, leaving aside useless things, cutting off those that are harmful and refuting those that are false" (pp. 12–13).

This parallel between philosophy and the history of philosophy can be traced back to an idea shared by German historians that true philosophy consists in eclecticism and that the historian of philosophy needs to be an eclectic: "How could anyone be an eclectic if he had nothing from which to choose? Who could judge the philosophical schools if he had not first learnt and examined these same schools, at least the main ones?" (p. 18). In the context of the eclectic perspective, the history of philosophy becomes an indispensable tool for philosophical research, providing the material on which the eclectic exercises choice and sharpens his critical faculties.

The primary purpose of Boehm's dissertation was to spread and promote the history of philosophy, removing the obstacles opposing it in the sphere of academic study: "In this, both teachers and students are at fault: as to the teachers, either they do not understand, and in that case the art [of the history of philosophy] is despised solely because of ignorance, or if they do understand it, they are either envious and want to keep the knowledge for themselves only and prefer to lead their pupils along dark and ambiguous roads rather than the right way; or, following the example of their predecessors, they restrict themselves to recounting things in the same way as their fathers did, and even discourage their listeners from this type of study. And the students, in turn, do not thirst after it because they are ignorant of it, or they despise it because it requires a great deal of effort, and they try to disguise the laziness and poverty of their minds by offering as an excuse for their shame Cassius Longinus's saying 'to whose benefit?', as if nothing were of any use save that which fills the stomach or the purse" (pp. 26–27). Here it is interesting to stress not so much the argument against the teachers of the time – ignorant, presumptuous, and conservative – found also in Gerhard, but rather the exhortation to students to apply themselves to the study of the history of philosophy, without putting forward the "to whose benefit" excuse because they cannot see its immediate use. The history of philosophy contains hidden treasures (*thesauros abditos*), and to discover them requires diligent, patient, and conscientious study.

As we have seen, the history of philosophy had an almost exclusively didactic purpose in eighteenth-century German culture, and for this reason it was written in Latin. The genre began and was spread in the world of the universities and it is there that it sought an appropriate place. Although he did not give up this possibility, Heumann wrote in German, in order to secure a wider circulation for his work in the world of German culture. However, his use of German meant that his *Acta philosophorum* was almost unknown in other European countries. Brucker was to follow Heumann's example in his early days with the *Kurtze Fragen*, but would later turn to Latin with his *Historia critica philosophiae*, and from that moment German philosophical historiography began to arouse interest throughout the rest of Europe.

Bibliographical Note

There is a list of "theoretical" writings on the history of philosophy in the first half of the eighteenth century in Struve, I, pp. 161–163. Cf. Braun, pp. 100–119; L. Geldsetzer, *Die Philosophie der Philosophiegeschichte im 19. Jahrhundert. Zur*

Wissenschaftstheorie der Philosophiebeschreibung und -betrachtung (Meisenheim am Glan, 1968), pp. 16, 130–131; Rak, pp. 63–128; L. Malusa, "Sul ruolo del concetto di interpretazione nella storiografia filosofica tra il Seicento e il Settecento", in *Storiografia ed ermeneutica*, ed. C. Giacon (Padua, 1975), pp. 117–134; Del Torre, pp. 65–68; Longo, *Historia philosophiae philosophica*, pp. 67–90.

6.1 Ephraim Gerhard (1682–1718)

Introductio praeliminaris in historiam philosophicam

6.1.1. Ephraim Gerhard (*Gerhardus*), jurist and lawyer at the Court of Weimar, was born in Giersdorf in Silesia in 1682, the son of a Protestant pastor, as were most of the authors discussed in these chapters. He received his early schooling from his father and he soon became interested in the study of theology. In 1700 he was sent to the University of Wittenberg and, shortly after that, the University of Leipzig. It was here that he first encountered the history of philosophy, thanks to Gottfried Olearius whose private course in philosophy he followed. Finally, he settled in Jena where he attended the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy, becoming a pupil of Philipp Treuner and Buddeus. Having given up his interests in theology, he devoted himself to the study of law, obtaining the degree of doctor in Jurisprudence and gaining the respect of Ch. Thomasius. After obtaining the chair of morals and politics at the University of Jena, he died in 1718 at the age of only thirty-six.

6.1.2. Following the example of Ch. Thomasius, who had concentrated on instrumental and moral philosophy, Gerhard restricted his literary output to these two areas of research. But his first work was on the history of philosophy: *Dissertatio de studio historiae philosophicae* (Jena, 1706), republished with a few additions in 1711 with a different title: *Introductio praeliminaris in historiam philosophicam*. In this, apparently for the first time, the question of the nature of the history of philosophy and its links with other disciplines, was addressed.

His work on logic had a wide circulation: *Delineatio philosophiae rationalis eclectice efformatae et usui seculi adcomodatae, sive de intellectus humani usu atque emendatione libri duo. Accessit, ob similitudinem argumenti, Dissertatio de praecipuis sapientiae impedimentis* (Jena, 1709, 1716^2). Gerhard professed himself an eclectic and declared his preference for the modern philosophers over Aristotle; he rejected the syllogistic method and affirmed, with Descartes, that evidence is the ultimate criterion of truth. He published *Cogitationes subitanae de veritatis cognoscendae principio* (Jena, 1706), on this subject.

His works on moral philosophy, especially on natural law, were more numerous. As well as many dissertations based on Thomasius' guidelines, he wrote the *Delineatio Juris naturalis, sive de principiis Justi libri tres, quibus fundamenta generalia doctrinae de Decoro accesserunt* (Jena, 1712), preceded by an introduction on the concept of natural jurisprudence: "De juris prudentiae naturalis indole et natura prolegomena". Finally, he produced one work of political philosophy: *Einleitung zur Staats-Lehre* (Jena, 1713, 1717^2).

6.1.3. *The themes of the* Introductio in historiam philosophicam

This work, read here in its second edition, consists of thirty-four quarto pages, divided into thirty-one paragraphs with headings. Gerhard immediately introduces his definition of the history of philosophy, its purposes, and its limits (§§ 1–5); then he turns to its misuse (§ 6), and, at greater length, its usefulness. In general, all educated people ought to be interested in the history of philosophy, since it provides subjects for discussion in erudite conversation and accustoms us to "finding out the opinions of others" (§ 7). But there are some disciplines that have a more direct relationship with it: theology (§ 8–19), jurisprudence (§§ 20–22), medicine (§ 23) and philosophy (§§ 24–27). After analysing the way that knowledge of the history of philosophy can lead to deeper understanding of these sciences, Gerhard describes the factors that have hitherto delayed the rise and hindered the spread of philosophical historiography. There were external causes, such as the prevalence of a dogmatic philosophical attitude, but also internal ones rising from the objective difficulties of a type of study that requires specific qualities on the part of the historian (§§ 28–31). The work concludes with a wish that scholars should at last apply themselves to this discipline with determination, in the conviction that it would lead "to the improvement of ourselves, the overcoming of errors, an increase in truth and the restoration of true virtue in the hearts of men".

6.1.4. *The object of the* historia philosophica

The purpose of the *Introductio* is to demonstrate that history of philosophy can be an autonomous discipline. Seventeenth-century works and polyhistorical research had already raised the question of the place that the history of philosophy should occupy in historical study (cf. *Models*, I, pp. 66–71). Gerhard's answer was that *historia philosophica* is a historical science; more precisely, it is part of *historia litteraria*, whose task is to study the vicissitudes of human understanding (*quae in humanum animum cadunt*), from the beginning of the world. But the history of philosophy has a purpose of its own, which justifies its claim to be a discipline in its own right in the context of literary history, and it is in fact philosophy: "Knowledge of things both divine and human as far as they can be known by correct reason, with the purpose of acquiring and maintaining the true happiness of human beings" (p. 3).

This concept of philosophy, borrowed explicitly from Buddeus, enabled Gerhard to give a preliminary definition of the history of philosophy: "A true and not falsified record of the things done by the philosophers, made in order to know the truth and do good, so that human knowledge may be increased and also that it may be of use in the other branches of learning" (p. 4). The historical aspect (*rerum gestarum commemoratio*) of the discipline is emphasized in the first place: it is a description of facts, not imagined facts but real ones, and so the first characteristic of the history of philosophy is to be historically trustworthy, consistent with historical facts. Philosophy is a theoretical science: it leads to the knowledge of what is true "under the guidance of correct reason", but it is also practical because possession of the truth is oriented towards human happiness, towards good actions. The historian will bear in mind both of these factors; he will not restrict himself to a simple description of dogmas, but he will check their effectiveness against the moral conduct of the philosophers.

In this more detailed examination of the purpose of *historia philosophica*, Gerhard singles out the internal links and the limits of historiographical inquiry: "In fact, it describes those philosophers who showed some form of wisdom; they are considered either in relation to the episodes of their lives common to all men, or in relation to how much good they produced, or their knowledge of the truth and the benefit that came from it. All of this presupposes a preliminary knowledge of the succession of the philosophers without which the rest cannot be arranged correctly" (pp. 4–5). Then Gerhard divides the historical analysis into three phases:

(1) *the relationship between the schools and the philosophers*, to give an order to his account;
(2) *the teachings of each school*, the area that is simultaneously most important and most neglected: "It is to be regretted that this part, which is in fact the most important, is the most neglected" (p. 5);
(3) *the lives of the philosophers*: it is interesting to know not only their birthplace or mother's name, but also "the disposition of the minds and the temperament of mind and body of the individual philosophers" (p. 6).

The most original aspect of this framework is the centrality of the philosophical teachings in the history of philosophy, the result of Gerhard's project to define the history of philosophy on the basis of its object, that is to say, philosophy. It thus provides a unitary and convincing answer, on a theoretical level, to demands widely noted in early eighteenth-century historiographical practice, where certain historiographical forms and methods were gradually being consolidated which were mostly aimed at examining the content, with the result that *historia philosophica* emerged as a science "with the purpose of increasing human knowledge and for its usefulness to other sciences". Precisely for this reason, reference to the usefulness of the history of philosophy to the various spheres of knowledge became a central factor.

6.1.5. *The relationship with other disciplines*

The study of the history of philosophy is not an end in itself, but is a tool to be used in other disciplines. Anyone who applies himself to it as sheer pleasure for the mind (*ad oblectationem animi*) or who treats it as "learning in itself", is committing an error, since it is no more than a "tool of learning", just like hermeneutics, together with which it forms an integral part of instrumental philosophy (§ 6). He who makes it the object of his study acts like the scientist, who, with the aid of mathematics, constructs a machine that he himself does not know what to do with, and then expects people to respect his useless invention. Precisely because the history of philosophy is a tool for learning, it is necessary to determine its usefulness clearly and to recognise the areas in which it could be applied.

The most important use comes from its connection with theology and religion. The subject of heresy and the defence of Christianity provides an opportunity for a new approach to the history of philosophy, more attentive to the content of those teachings that refer directly to contemporary problems and interests. The central point of all orthodox theology is to prove the divinity of Christ and to affirm the necessity of revelation. The history of philosophy provides theology with a solid

and convincing argument: man's wisdom and virtue, even those of the most excellent philosophers, is foolishness compared with the wisdom and perfection of Christ: "Show me, I pray, a philosopher from among the wisest who has not flaunted his pride or who has not displayed envious greed or who has not been affected by the temptations of foolish pleasure [. . .]. I will show you Christ, shining with the splendour of a wisdom far above the ability of the human mind to understand, such that the entire human race, even with every kind of study and effort, could not have found in his life even the tiniest trace of sin, but would have observed in him, when considering the question, of course without prejudices, the most perfect example of every solid virtue. When I think about this, I am wholly convinced by this strong argument; Holy Scripture is the book that teaches perfectly all aspects of true wisdom, so that we will not find a single man endowed with the light of nature from all the philosophers who have existed up to this time, who has written and taught things as reasonable, as useful, and as probable, according to reason itself, as Christ did with his disciples" (pp. 11–12). Along with this result, which touches the very heart of philosophy, *historia philosophica* provides a decisive aid to interpreting the Bible and the writings of the Fathers (§§ 13–15), helps us to understand the origin of heresy and enables theology to respond to the accusations of the enemies of the church with valid arguments.

It is even more important for the philosopher to have a thorough knowledge of the history of philosophy: it is considered "the universal tool of the whole of philosophy" (p. 30). The first stage in every philosophical method is to free oneself from errors and prejudices. Historical analysis leads precisely to this: "Looking through the evidence of all the philosophers, we see that even the greatest of them have often fallen into unworthy errors, and that there does not exist a single philosopher who has taken all aspects of wisdom to the limit [. . .]. On this basis, wisdom warns the mind attracted by the prejudice of excessive respect for others not to accept any insufficiently demonstrated and proven principle, and not to swear on the words of a master whether ancient or modern. Rather, it encourages the prudence to doubt until things can be understood clearly and distinctly, as far as the nature of the object allows" (p. 30). Historical study has the power to neutralise the prejudices of authority and school learning; no philosopher has attained the truth once for all and in a complete way, since even the best has fallen into error and contradiction. After giving up the illusion that others can offer the truth without effort, man learns to have faith in himself and in his own intellectual capabilities, but not to the point of becoming dogmatic in turn.

Having cleared the ground of prejudice, the philosopher should turn his attention decisively to the search for truth. Following the approach taken by Ch. Thomasius and Buddeus, Gerhard brings together the history of philosophy and eclecticism. Truth is obtained better through personal reflection than through the confused reading of books; but it is extremely useful to know what others have perceived and discovered, according to the saying '*oculi plus vident quam oculo*'. The history of philosophy can give us the material on which to meditate: "The history of philosophy provides us with the opinions of others, both true and false, it judges them on the basis of first principles already established, and with the aid of the theory

of logic it places them in the correct order; a number of other opinions, suggested by one's own experience and one's own reflection, are added to these, and in this way the true and complete edifice of eclectic philosophy is constructed" (p. 32). The philosophical method involves two aspects, the first of which, starting from history of philosophy, leads to a critical and ordered vision of the possible solutions to various questions; these results are then selected and integrated with the data suggested by one's own experience and reflection and inserted into a suitable structure, in a coherent and organic system of explanation. In this case too, the historical task is instrumental; it provides reflections "both true and false" on which the eclectic thinker should exercise his choice. A scholar is committing an error if he derives from the history of philosophy "an inconsistent historical philosophy", in the sense of accepting the various teachings without first submitting them to critical examination, like someone who uses it as a basis for radical (*non sobrium*) scepticism: in both of these circumstances, the study of history is adopted as the aim and end of research, and the most important aspect of philosophical activity, that is the critical use of the rational faculty, is rejected.

6.1.6. *The conditions for philosophical historiography*

In Gerhard's opinion, the discipline of the history of philosophy was still inadequately practised and developed. In particular, he noted the lack of a general history, although the writings of J. Thomasius, fragmentary and still in part unpublished (p. 4), aimed to fill this. This somewhat negative opinion of previous historiographical work was typical of German historians in the early eighteenth century: they tended to disparage and criticize the works of Hornius, Vossius, and Stanley, while using them extensively themselves.

The historical framework has to be complete; it has to embrace medieval and modern, as well as ancient, philosophy in a unitary vision. Secondly, there is a critical urgency, strong and conscious, that comes from the acceptance of eclecticism, and that brings to the fore an interest in content and in discriminating judgement: "[The eclectic philosopher] does not harbour towards the others such distrust as to reject, after merely having heard an unknown name, things not yet proven, and to fear everything that at first sight seems to diverge from the teachings of his ancestors and the fathers. Giving each its correct value, he decides to follow one or other of the philosophers, without however following any of them, but rather he chooses with prudence from all of them that which is good, leaving the bad things to those who wrote them, and most importantly, he philosophizes eclectically" (pp. 30–31).

According to Gerhard, eclecticism and philosophical historiography are two historically inseparable phenomena. Up to his time, the history of philosophy had met with little success, because it was dominated by sectarian and Scholastic philosophy, with its pointless terminological arguments and its love of Aristotle: "among the causes of this neglect was the prevalence for many centuries of that kind of learning made up of pointless hair-splitting notions and speculation, if indeed this merits the name of learning, since while Aristotle in himself was a good and praiseworthy man, when transformed into an idol unworthy of learned persons, he became an obstacle to true wisdom. One can glimpse in places that as soon as this learning

was taken out of the shadows, a more wholesome and more solid philosophy began to show itself". Eclectic philosophy creates the conditions for the development of philosophical historiography, but at the same time this acts as a support and justification for the eclectic's research; hence hatred of the sectarians "who fought tooth and nail so that this sort of study would not come to light" (p. 34).

A second element that discouraged interest in historical philosophical studies was, in Gerhard's opinion, the intrinsic difficulty of the undertaking: it is no small task to inspect the books of so many authors, to keep such varied ideas in one's mind, and to reconstruct the teachings of the philosophers with the aid of evidence that is often confused and full of gaps. On this point, Gerhard listed the tools that the historian needs in order to undertake his work and to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion (§ 31, "De requisitis philosophicae historiae"). First of all, he must be an expert in ancient languages and must have access to a large number of books, "since all that is said has to be drawn from the testimony of others" (p. 35). Knowledge of the rules of hermeneutics, that is the *ars critica*, "which is very useful when one has to draw the teachings of others out of their obscurity and find something comprehensible from the confused and corrupt sources of the Ancients" (p. 36), is indispensable. Finally, he needs to know the "characteristics" of moral philosophy, "which show the heart of the philosophers", and have a mind free from passions and prejudices.

6.1.7. We can note here the absence of philosophy from the list of tools required by the historian; apparently, the historian does not need to be a philosopher. The history of philosophy is itself a historical discipline and therefore the evaluation of the past of philosophy will initially be marked by a historical criterion, that is, one based on the *ars critica*: the historian makes use of hermeneutics to grasp the real sense of philosophical writings. The philosopher's judgement which, as we have seen, is at the basis of the choice that the eclectic will have to make, appears at a second stage and does not involve the historical reconstruction of the philosophical systems. Gerhard stresses the contribution that the history of philosophy makes to philosophical research, but he does not examine in sufficient detail the reverse connection, that is to say how philosophical historiography can be conditioned by the theoretical vision and by the attitude of the eclectic philosopher, apart from observing that in practice the development of philosophical historiography coincided with the emergence of eclecticism. Some years later, Heumann was to draw from this premise a conclusion that was decisive from the historiographical point of view: historical criteria are not sufficient; textual criticism must be accompanied by philosophical criticism. For Heumann the historian cannot *not* be a philosopher.

6.1.8. On the life and works of Ephraim Gerhard: Stolle, pp. 557–558; Schmersahl, pp. 35–36; Jöcher, II, coll. 947–948; Heinsius, II, col. 70; *Nuovo dizionario istorico* (Bassano, 1796), VII, pp. 133–134; Gumposch, pp. 138–139. On the dependence of Gerhard's philosophy on Ch. Thomasius: Schneiders, *Naturrecht und Liebesethik*, pp. 303–304.

For the opinion of contemporaries on the *Introductio in historiam philosophicam*: Stolle, p. 421; Struve, I, p. 162; Heumann, II, pp. 950–956; Schmersahl, p. 35. A review of the *Delineatio philosophiae rationalis*, in AE, 1719, pp. 309–312. Recent studies: Geldsetzer, *Die Philosophie der Philosophiegeschichte*, p. 16; Braun, pp. 101–102; Del Torre, pp. 65–66; Longo, *Historia philosophiae philosophica*, pp. 60–65; D.R. Kelley, "Intellectual History in a Global Age", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, LXVI (2005), pp. 155–167: 158; Hunter, *Rival Enlightenments*, pp. 4–5.

6.2 Christoph August Heumann (1681–1764)

Einleitung zur historia philosophica

6.2.1. Christoph August Heumann, one of the most eminent scholars of the first half of the eighteenth century, can, because of his writings on the nature and purpose of philosophical historiography, be considered as the founder a theoretical level of the discipline of the history of philosophy in Germany, of which Brucker would later be the main exponent.

He was born in Allstedt in Thuringia in 1681; at the age of eighteen he went to the University of Jena, where he took courses in Theology and Philosophy, taught by Ph. Treuner, Georg A. Hamberger, and Struve. He became *magister* in Philosophy in 1702 with the disputation *De philosophia Epicteti*. He at once began teaching, giving private lessons on Natural Law and Logic, and commenting on the texts of Pufendorf and Buddeus; but he decided to enlarge the range of his own culture by making an educational journey that took him in 1705 to the main cities of northern Germany (Frankfurt, Hildesheim, Hanover, Hamburg, and Bremen) and as far as Holland, where he visited the most important university towns.

Heumann consulted the libraries in all the cities he visited, looking for rare books and manuscripts, but above all he sought the company and conversation of scholars; this was why he used a diary in which from time to time he recorded impressions and carefully summed up the points of view of those with whom he spoke.[5] He tried to meet representatives of the numerous religious sects in the Netherlands; he was particularly curious to hear the opinions of the learned men of that country on German culture, on Buddeus, Ch. Thomasius, August H. Francke and the Pietistic movement. Among the most important people he met were Basnage, Le Clerc, Bernoulli, Vitringa, Van Dale, Roël, Jurieu, Colerus, and on, returning to Germany, Fabricius in Hamburg and Leibniz in Hanover. In Rotterdam he was able to visit the elderly Bayle, whom he praised as a very courteous and kindly person. Heumann expressed some disagreements to the famous author of the *Dictionnaire* on the relation between reason and faith, which he did not see in contradictory terms,

[5]The contents of the diary of his travels in Holland are recorded at length by his biographer Georg Andreas Cassius, *Ausführliche Lebensbeschreibung des um die gelehrte Welt Hochverdienten D. Christoph August Heumanns* (Cassel, 1768), in the chapter: "Von dessen gelehrter Reise nach Holland", pp. 32–137.

and on the origin of evil, which he insisted had a meaning in the plans of Providence, that is it existed "in order to manifest his goodness more clearly to man" (Cassius, *Ausführliche Lebensbeschreibung*, pp. 41–45).

After returning to Jena, he took up his university teaching again, but his nonconformist ideas on theology prevented his career from advancing very fast. His somewhat unbenevolent attitude towards churchmen had appeared from his adolescent years, when he had given up the idea of an ecclesiastical profession in the family tradition, declaring: "I have never had the slightest intention of becoming a priest, partly because I am by nature very averse to ceremonies, partly because I am not able to repeat in good faith, nor to believe in simplicity, everything in which the church believes" (Cassius, *Ausführliche Lebensbeschreibung*, pp. 26–27). Thus he was obliged to fall back on less important responsibilities: in 1709 he was appointed inspector of the theological seminary in Eisenach, and in 1717 he moved to the grammar school in Göttingen, where he was the last rector before its conversion into a university. His opinions on pedagogy are expressed in the speech read on the occasion of his installation as head of the school: *De tribus scholae finibus, pietate, eruditione morumque venustate*.

His interests ranged from philosophy to philology, historical research, and law, but he preferred to concentrate on theology, in which he obtained a doctorate with the *Disputatio de superstitione verae fidei innocue admixta*, presented in Helmstädt in 1728. In 1734 he became permanent lecturer in the history of literature in the philosophical faculty of the new University of Göttingen, though he had to wait until 1745 to receive a chair in the faculty of Theology. In the theological field, he worked for the unification of all Protestant churches, and to this end he proposed the abandonment of the two dogmas that were the source of the split between Protestants: real presence in the Eucharist, accepted by the Lutherans, and the *decretum absolutum* on predestination supported by the Reformed believers. To him, there was perfect conformity between the light of revelation and reason, between Christianity and philosophy; and this was the tenor of the title of a *programma* read in Göttingen in 1722: *De Christo, sapiente perfecto, sive demonstratio divinitatis religionis christianae*. The Lutherans regarded him with suspicion, and he was obliged to ask for early retirement (1758) and to promise not to disseminate his ideas in public.[6] In his defence he wrote an *Erweis, dass die Lehre der Reformirte Kirche von dem heiligen Abendmahle die rechte und wahre sei*, published in Göttingen in 1764, some months after Heumann's death, which took place in May of that year.

He was linked by correspondence and friendship with many learned men, German and foreign, among them Mathurin de La Croze and Brucker. From 1737 he was a member of the Latin Society of Jena, and in 1743 he was nominated as an honorary member of the "Göttingische deutsche Gesellschaft". From 1710 to 1747 he was one of the most regular contributors to the *Acta Eruditorum* of Leipzig.

---

[6]The history of the dispute with the Lutherans over the Eucharist is told by his biographer (Cassius, *Ausführliche Lebensbeschreibung*, pp. 194–202). Heumann was annoyed with the *praeiudicium religionis* that not even Luther had managed to eliminate completely: "Das *praeiudicium Religionis* hat eine so grosse Macht und Gewalt, dass es die Menschen blendet, dass sie nicht sehen, was andere auf das deutlichste erkennen" (p. 197).

6.2.2. Heumann's literary output, covering a period of about sixty years, from 1702, the year of his first dissertation, on a juridical subject, *De duellis principum*, up to his death, was very extensive. His early writings, for the most part *disputationes* or articles for journals, ranged over a very wide field of inquiry, including law, political philosophy, philology and, above all, the history of philosophy: *Disputatio de vita et philosophia Epicteti* (Jena, 1702); *De autoxeia Philosophorum* (Jena, 1703); *De fato uxoris Loti non miraculoso* (Jena, 1706); "Coniectura critica de Philosophumenis", AE, 1710; "De distinctione iuris naturalis in absolutum et hypotheticum, item de discrimine iusti, honesti, aequi et decoris", AE, Suppl. IV; "Fabula de Hippocrate, Democriti insaniae medicinam adhibere iusso ex historia veterum philosophorum", AE, 1713; "Von dem Nahmen der Welt-Weisheit", in *Neue Bibliothek*, part XXVII, then in *Acta philosophorum*, I, pp. 314–321.

From 1710 he began producing works on more wide-ranging subjects: *Schediasma de anonymis et pseudonymis libri duo* (Jena, 1711), republished in 1740 as an introduction to J.C.Mylius, *Bibliotheca anonymorum et pseudonymorum* (Hamburg, 1740); *Parerga critica* (Jena, 1712); *Vita E. Stokmanni, superint. Altsted*. (Eisenach, 1712); *Der politische Philosophus, das ist eine vernünfftmässige Anweisung in gemeinen Leben* (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1714, 1724^2); *Epistola de circulatoria litteratorum vanitate*, written under the name of "Stadelius", that is, a native of Allstedt, and added to the orations of Menckenius (editor of the *Acta eruditorum*), *De charlataneria eruditorum* (Amsterdam, 1716); *Lutherus apocalypticus* (Hanover, 1717), containing six dissertations on the history of the Reformation. His reputation, abroad as well as in Germany, was to a large extent connected with his *Conspectus reipublicae litterariae sive via ad historiam litterariam* (Hanover, 1718, 1763^2), which, contemporary with Stolle's manual of literary history, but more lively and written in Latin, came out in numerous editions, the last edited by G.N. Eyring at the end of the century (Hanover, 1791–1797, 2 Vols.); in the preface to the various editions, the author lists his literary publications, in chronological order and divided into subjects: orations, debates, academic dissertations, articles for journals, books, editions of texts, and translations.

The publication of a work that was among his most important and that will be the specific subject of our analysis, falls into the period when Heumann was rector of the grammar school in Göttingen. This is the *Acta philosophorum, das ist: Gründliche Nachrichten aus der Historia philosophica, nebst beygefügten Urteilen von denen dahin gehörigen alten und neuen Büchern* (Halle: zu finden in den Rengerischen Buchhandl., 1715–1727). It is not a systematic work, but a journal devoted specifically to the history of philosophy, though the articles are all by the same author. It was published in Halle from 1715; it is made up of eighteen parts, divided into three volumes, each of six parts. Four issues appeared in each of the first two years; from 1717 to 1727 there was only one a year.

Heumann's greater commitments in teaching and his theological interests, which were becoming more and more demanding, prevented him from giving systematic and continuous attention to the history of philosophy, although he was always to retain a lively interest in this branch of study. This is borne out by an episode recorded by a biographer. In 1730 Brucker, who was then in the process of compiling

his *Kurtze Fragen*, which Heumann was later to review in the *Acta eruditorum*, asked him for all his writings on the history of philosophy, promising to return them within a year. Brucker kept his word and sent them back by a mutual friend in Leipzig. However, the friend did not bother about them and they went missing: "I would not have sold even for 1,000 imperials these collections that have taken me many years of work" was Heumann's bitter comment on the disagreeable incident (cf. Cassius, *Ausführliche Lebensbeschreibung*, pp. 386–387).

During the early years of his teaching as professor of the History of Literature at Göttingen, Heumann was busy writing his great historical works: *Primitiae Gottingenses academicae* (Hanover, 1731); *Gottingische Schul-Historie* (Göttingen, 1735); *Bibliotheca historica academica* (Göttingen, 1738); *Zeitliche und geschichtliche Beschreibung der Stadt Göttingen* (Göttingen, 1738, 3 Vols.). Other historical writings: *Prolegomena historica, sive introductio in studium historicum* (1723), then in *Poecile*, T. III; *Oratio de religionis a Luthero restitutae forti faustoque introitu in urbem Gottingam* (Göttingen, 1727); *De Germanis litterarum secreta ignorantibus, ad Taciti Germ. cap. 3* (Göttingen, 1719); "Ehrenrettung der alten Deutschen, welchen die Abschreiber des Taciti eine höchst barbarische Gewohnheit angedichtet haben", in *Hamburgische vermischte Bibliothek*, II; "Neuer Beweis, dass nicht Zwinglius, sondern Lutherus der erste Reformator gewesen sey", ibi, II; *Supplementa historiae litterariae Gottingensis* (Göttingen, 1755). Part of his academic output up to 1730 is collected in *Poecile*, 3 Vols. (Göttingen, 1722–1731).

Heumann's chief activity was in education, where he worked as an inspector and as a reformer, as can be seen from the titles of some speeches made at the beginning of the school year at the grammar school in Göttingen: *Oratio de tribus scholae finibus* (1717); *De utilitate bibliothecarum publicarum* (1718); *De doctoris scholastici scientia atque conscientia* (1718); *De disciplina scholastica* (1722); *De selectissimis Gymnasii discipulis, sive de illustrioribus seminarii Gottingensis arboribus* (1723); *De concordia scholae atque ecclesiae* (1724); *De usu historiae litterariae pragmatico* (1725); *De pietatis studio in ingeniorum officinis acrius urgendo* (1726); *De necessitate legum scholasticarum occasione publicationis novae ordinationis scholasticae* (1728); *De philosophia, eamque philologis esse pernecessariam* (1732); *Rede, darinnen abgehandelt worden, dass die Theologie eine allgemeine Wissenschaft sey*, *nämlich ein jeder Gelehrter, ein gelehrter Theologus zu seyen schuldig* (1733).

Many of his writings on philology belong to this period: *Epistola critica de iure augendi linguam latinam novis vocabulis* (Eisenach, 1714); *Duae Epistolae ad Ch. Thomasius, in quibus aliquot loca Ciceronis illustrantur* (1723–1724); *Etliche Fabeln Phädri in teutsche Verse gebracht* (Göttingen, 1729); *Sechs Reden Ciceronis verteutscht* (Eisenach, 1735); "Observatio critica, qua insigne mendum tollitur e Diogene Laertio", AE, 1737; *Commentatio de arte critica, in usum academicum seorsim excusa* (Nürnburg and Altdorf, 1747). To these titles can be added new editions of classical texts and of modern historical works: C. Cellarii *Latinitatis liber memorialis* (Göttingen, 1718); A. Tribbechovii *Liber de doctoribus scholasticis* (Jena, 1719); Quintilian, *Dialogus de causis corruptae eloquentiae* (Göttingen, 1719); various orations of Cicero published in Hamburg (1733) and Eisenach

(1735, 1749); the *Opera* of Lactantius (Jena, 1736); the *Antiquitates academicae* of Conringius(1738); the *Vita Lutheri a Melancthone scripta* (Göttingen, 1741); and the *De liberorum educatione* of Plutarch (Leipzig, 1748). All of these works are introduced by prefaces written by the author; notable among these is his preface to Tribbechow's text, in which Heumann expounds his interpretation of the Scholastics: "De origine, appellatione, natura et *asophia* theologiae ac philosophiae scholasticae", pp. vi–xxxii.

Heumann was more active in the field of theology after 1740, when he finally obtained the chair of Theology at the University of Göttingen. We must also note his vast work of translation and commentary on the New Testament: *Teutsche Uebersetzung des neuen Testaments* (Hanover 1748, 1750^2); *Erklärung des neuen Testaments* (Hanover, 1750–1763), in twelve volumes, the first on the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, the second on the Gospel of Luke, another two on that of John, two on the Acts of the Apostles, and as many as six volumes on the letters of Saint Paul; *Ammerckungen über seinen Erklärungen des neuen Testaments* (Hanover, 1764); *Succincta interpretatio Apocalypseos Johannis Apostoli* (Göttingen, 1764). The edition of dissertations written between 1740 and 1755 bears testimony to the breadth of his theological interests: *Sylloge dissertationum,* 4 Vols. (Göttingen, 1743–1750); *Nova sylloge dissertationum*, 2 Vols. (Rostock and Wismar, 1752–1754).

Finally, one must not forget Heumann's close collaboration with the *Acta eruditorum* of Leipzig, for which he wrote hundreds of reviews (his biographer gives a total of 495) of texts on historical, theological, philosophical, and historical philosophical subjects: the latter include reviews of his *Acta philosophorum*, Lévesque de Burigny's *Histoire de la philosophie païenne,* Stolle's *Historie der Gelahrtheit*, Capasso's *Historia philosophica*, and Brucker's *Otium Vindelicum* and *Kurtze Fragen*.

6.2.3. *The "Acta philosophorum"*

The *Acta philosophorum* was the first specialist journal devoted to the history of philosophy. It was written in German, following the tendency of early eighteenth-century philosophical culture, which, particularly under the pressure of Ch. Thomasius, rejected the scholastic tradition and looked for a circulation beyond the closed world of scholars. The purpose of the review was to offer, from time to time, in an easy style and in short articles, accounts of the life and teaching of ancient and modern philosophers, following a method that claimed to be new in contrast with previous attempts at writing *historia philosophica*. According to Heumann, these lacked philosophical spirit; however, he was not only taking on the historical reconstruction of systems but also aimed to acquire a critical vision of philosophical problems. Only in this way was it possible to construct a *historia philosophica* that was not only a *historia philosophiae* but also a *historia philosophiae philosophica*, which is what the original title of the journal should have been: *Historia philosophiae philosophica, das ist, historische und critisirende Beschreibung der Philosophie, was solche von Anfange der Welt biss auff gegenwärtige Zeit vor fata gehabt: worbey zugleich der vornehmsten Philosophorum Leben*

beschrieben, dero Meynungen gründlich untersuchet, und darüber raisoniret wird. Realizing the impossibility of completing all parts of the work, Heumann chose to fall back on a less demanding title, which should be familiar to the reader, imitating as it did the famous *Acta eruditorum* of Leipzig (*Acta philosophorum*, "Vorbericht").

The *Acta philosophorum* also differs from other historiographical works in its internal structure. The author used a journal in order to reduce the difficulties and to keep the reader's interest alive: "A book not read is a hidden treasure" ("Vorbericht"). To avoid boring his readers with an over-systematized work, he did not follow a chronological order, but mixed ancient with modern, difficult subjects with easier ones. He did not claim that it was complete: "This is not a work for one man alone. I shall do what I can, and I hope to find after me others who will not only correct my shortcomings but will also continue my work better and more accurately" (I, p. 460). The author made this somewhat pessimistic remark in the third part of the *Acta*, when he realized that the collaboration of other scholars which he had urgently requested when he introduced the journal had not materialized. He had hoped to find readers with not only goodwill but also education and keen judgement ("Vorbericht"). Apart from an "Epistola" by Johann Christoph Colerus on the philosophy of Melancthon (II, pp. 603–615), a *Dissertatio* by Theodor Hasaeus on Potamon (III, pp. 711–745) and a polemical reply by La Croze on the atheism of Bruno (II, pp. 792–809), the whole weight of the journal was to fall on Heumann's shoulders, and as he was busy with other undertakings, he was to slow down the publication of the parts of the journal and in particular, to reduce the number of main articles.

Each part contains three sorts of articles: the first discuss "principal", demanding, subjects which could be inserted as sections or paragraphs in the author's future *Historia philosophica*: the seven chapters of the "Einleitung zur historia philosophica" (cf. below, para 6.2.4), three articles on the philosophy of the Patriarchs (I, pp. 755–809 and 925–944; II, pp. 1–58), one each on Barbarian philosophy (II, pp. 204–253), Scholasticism (II, pp. 281–301), Pomponazzi (II, pp. 327–380), Cicero (II, pp. 441–466), the Seven Wise Men (II, pp. 493–537), the ancient Egyptians (II, pp. 659–697), women philosophers (II, pp. 825–875), the Ionics (III, pp. 159–210), and others.

A second group of articles deals with "special" topics, generally on biographical aspects, and was intended to eliminate from historiography legends that had grown up around the lives of the philosophers: a rehabilitation of Xantippe (I, pp. 103–126), the physical appearance of Socrates (I, pp. 126–138), the Platonic community of women (I, pp. 809–848), the chronology of Potamon (I, pp. 848–868), the life of Locke (I, pp. 972–1031), the tub of Diogenes the Cynic (I, pp. 58–69), various articles on Bruno (I, pp. 501–520; II, pp. 380–406; pp. 406–436; pp. 436–441; pp. 792–809; pp. 810–823), a eulogy of Aristotle (II, pp. 711–717), the name of the Peripatetics (II, pp. 876–899), Lyndorach the Indian philosopher (III, pp. 85–88), and the lives of Galileo (III, pp. 400–423, 467–484, 803–814, 938), Th. Burnet (III, pp. 434–438), Abelard (III, pp. 529–586), and Theophrastus (III, pp. 661–681).

As can be seen, the subjects chosen range over the whole history of philosophy, but we can observe Heumann's preference for two areas, pre-Classical philosophy

and Italian thinkers in the Renaissance. On the first point, it should be remembered that for Heumann philosophy was born in Greece and reached full maturity only with Aristotle; in fact the fullest articles are on pre-Aristotelian philosophy. The reason for this interest is two-fold: firstly, the author wished to show that here we are not in the presence of "real" philosophy, and thus to clear away a whole sector that was much studied but always misunderstood in its theoretical significance. Secondly, he was carrying out the role of the Enlightenment philosopher, warning the reader against the return of barbarism, always lying in wait as the fate of the Scholastics illustrated, and fighting against the contamination of philosophy with superstition, the true cornerstone of the Scholastic system: "In the meantime it will be of some use if in the following articles I present the opinions of the ancient barbarians or of so-called barbarian philosophy. In fact, the origin of many errors still in fashion today will be recognized in that philosophy and it will be clearly shown that we can find much uncouthness and many barbarian opinions among learned people even in our own time" ("Von der Barbarey", II, p. 231).

Heumann gives an important place to the Italian philosophers, Galileo, "ein grosser Held in der Philosophie und sonderlich in der Astronomie" (III, p. 261), Campanella, whose *Syntagma de libris propriis et recta ratione studendi* is reviewed, and, in particular, Giordano Bruno, about whom there are several articles, some on his writings, others on his rehabilitation, acquitting him of the accusation of atheism ("Jordani Bruno Unschuld in puncto der Atheisterey", II, pp. 380–406; La Croze, "Vom Atheismo Jordani Bruni", II, pp. 792–809; "Schluss-Schrifft Jordani Bruni", II, pp. 810–823). Heumann's aim was to re-evaluate not Bruno's philosophy but his moral character, and he makes him a Lutheran martyr who preferred to endure death rather than renounce his faith.[7] The rehabilitation of Bruno had a place within the anti-Catholic polemic still alive among Protestants at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but in its strong condemnation of every form of persecution on religious grounds it can be considered as a prologue to the famous rehabilitation of Lessing. According to Heumann, Bruno's philosophy had been interpreted in an atheistic sense because of his condemnation to death for atheism; when examined more carefully, however, it seemed to be innocuous, as long as one bore in mind that the ambiguity of many expressions was due to an over-heated and poorly-disciplined imagination: "After having read diligently and attentively nearly all of Bruno's books, and having found them free of atheism, even though he had the temperament that atheists usually have, I wish now to write his rehabilitation, and to

[7] In his article on Bruno, Bayle accepts the assumption that he had been burnt at the stake for impiety: "Il avoit courru l'Allemagne, la France etc. et il auroit bien fait de continuer; car étant retourné en Italie, il y fut brulé, dit-on, comme un empie, l'an 1600" (Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, Amsterdam, 1740, I, p. 680). Bayle's opinion was strongly negative : Bruno was an atheist and a precursor of Spinoza: "il étoit un homme de beaucoup d'esprit, mais il emploia mal ses lumieres: car non seulement il attaqua la Philosophie d'Aristote, dans un tems où on ne le pouvoit faire sans exciter mille troubles, et sans s'exposer à mille persécutions; mais il attaqua aussi les véritez les plus importantes de la foi [. . .]. L'immensité de Dieu et le reste ne sont pas un dogme moins impie dans Jordanus Brunus, que dans Spinoza: ces deux Ecrivains sont unitaires outrez; ils ne reconnoissent qu'une seule substance dans la nature" (pp. 679–681).

show that although he was endowed with a mind that was not entirely sane and he had all kinds of bizarre fancies in his head, yet this man was not an atheist but was burnt as a heretic and Lutheran" (II, pp. 381–382).

A third type of article comprises reviews of works on the history of philosophy and bibliographical catalogues. Here we can find all the works that concern the genre *historia philosophica*: Jonsius' *De Scriptoribus* (I, pp. 159–170), the histories of philosophy written by Stanley (I, pp. 523–545), Hornius (I, pp. 1039–1061), Cozzando (II, pp. 319–326), de Launoy (III, pp. 149–158), Burnet (III, pp. 298–341), and Gale (III, pp. 793–820). Ample space is given also to Renaissance historiography (Burlaeus, Pesaro, Morellius, Gaudentius, Frisius) and to specialized histories, especially of moral philosophy (Gundling, Stolle). One of the first reviews is of the modern edition of Laertius (I, pp. 321–366); the most favourable concerns the *Discursus philosophicus* attributed to Pierre-Sylvain Régis (I, pp. 1061–1070; see above, Chapter 1, para 1.7), the first history of philosophy written by a philosopher (p. 1064).

Some parts of the *Acta philosophorum* contain bibliographical catalogues: on Pythagorean philosophy (I, pp. 367–381), with later supplements (I, pp. 751–754; II, pp. 487–491); on the Stoics (I, pp. 730–751; II, pp. 161–164, 478–487; III, pp. 109–124) and the Epicureans (II, pp. 637–650); on Eastern philosophy (II, pp. 173–204; III, pp. 485–494), the Cynics (II, pp. 899–911), the Platonists (III, pp. 900–911), concluding with the proposal for a work, to be called *Fragmenta historiae philosophicae* (III, pp. 930–937), which would put together the various dissertations on philosophical subjects (57 of which are listed) that had appeared in Germany in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, which published individually might risk going unnoticed and unused. This last part reveals Heumann's careful concern for the philosophical historiography of the period preceding his own time.

The journal in its entirety is of great interest for the modern reader concerned with the history of philosophical historiography, for whom it is a unique source of reference. To make this type of research easier, each volume is provided with two indices, of names and subjects, 57 pages in total.

6.2.4. *Themes of the "Einleitung zur historia philosophica"*

Although it came out in separate parts, the "Einleitung zur historia philosophica" is a unitary work, divided into seven chapters. In these pages Heumann aimed to address the theoretical and methodological problems of the history of philosophy and so to create the conditions for a more conscious and more critical historiography. He evidently had in mind the philosophical historiography of the preceding period, in particular that of Stanley, Hornius, and Vossius, which gave him material for discussion, but he clearly distanced himself from their proposed solutions, since he aimed at a history of philosophy written in philosophical and not merely historico-philological terms.

The first chapter ("Von deren Nutzbarkeit", I, pp. 1–63) addresses the problems of usefulness. In a certain sense it is a preliminary question, but its positive solution conditions the very possibility of the history of philosophy as a science; indeed, any knowledge that does not produce some benefit to mankind is to be rejected. On the

contrary, the history of philosophy reveals manifold uses: in general, in that it is a historical science, it sharpens the faculty of judgement, using it to distinguish truth from fable; as a philosophical discipline it guides the individual towards correct philosophizing, warns him to be eclectic, and shows the harmony of philosophy with true religion.

The theme of the next three chapters is the definition of the purpose of the history of philosophy: "Von denen vierlerley Bedeutungen der Wörter Sophia und Philosophia" (I, pp. 63–92); "Von dem Wesen und Begriff der Philosophie" (I, pp. 93–103); "Von denen Kennzeichen der falschen und unächten Philosophie" (I, pp. 179–236). The historical and philological examination of the term "Philosophie" is inadequate because of the ambiguity and range of its meaning; hence it is necessary to define the concept and essence of philosophy in a way universally valid for all time, to establish the boundaries and the purpose of *historia philosophica*.

The purpose is then also defined historically ("Von dem Ursprung und Wachsthum der Philosophie", I, pp. 246–314), in the search for the conditions, such as political freedom, that make the birth of philosophy and its development possible, the phases of which are described. After pointing out the historical conditions, the author speaks of the particular characteristics of mind or intelligence of each philosopher which make him more or less fit for philosophical research ("Von dem Ingenio philosophico", I, pp. 567–670; "Nachlese von dem Ingenio philosophico", III, pp. 817–847).

The seventh and final chapter, published before that on intelligence, deals with methodological questions ("De fide historica oder Von der Glaubwürdigkeit in dieser Historie", I, pp. 381–452), beginning with those generally encountered in the study of history and moving on to the specific difficulties of *historia philosophica*.

Two brief articles can be considered as appendices to the "Einleitung": "Von dem Nahmen der Welt-Weisheit" (I, pp. 314–321), in which Heumann speaks against the adoption of the term *Welt-Weisheit* to indicate philosophy, because of its negative connotation; and "Entheilung der Historiae philosophicae", in which he proposes a framework of division into periods for a new general history of philosophy. In all, there are 459 octavo pages, written within the first two years (1715–1716) and inserted in the first volume, as well as the thirty additional pages in the chapter on intelligence (*ingenium*) which appear in the last part at the end of the journal.

6.2.5. *The usefulness of the history of philosophy*

The analysis of the manifold uses of the history of philosophy, which in Gerhard's work occupied a large part of his theorization of the discipline, is also discussed at length by Heumann right at the beginning of the "Einleitung", thus emphasizing the supportive function that it had in his historiographical theory. The history of philosophy, at the point when it looks for its own foundations, tries to find a justification of a practical nature in order to appear a discipline worth studying, a useful science (*eine nützliche Wissenschaft*), that all learned people should be interested in promoting.

It is useful in two ways, general and specialised. The first is common to all study of history, the second belongs to the history of philosophy. History is a necessary

tool in various fields of learning. Every discipline, if it is to be studied adequately, needs to be understood in the context of its history, which shows its origin and progress (*den Ursprung und Fortgang*). Secondly, history sharpens the faculty of judgement by "training the intellect" to distinguish truth from error and to separate fables from true history: "Ordinary people can easily be allowed to argue in this way: it is written, so it must be true. But educated people should not be so credulous, but should have both the criterion of true history and the criterion of fables as a touchstone (*als einen Probien-Stein*) by which the stories of the Ancients must be checked" (p. 12). The history of philosophy offers many examples of improbable happenings: the school of Pythagoras is a hotchpotch of innumerable fables as are the lives of Thales and other ancient philosophers. Thus the task of the historian is indispensable for the promotion of a more solid and more critical culture prepared to believe only in what is historically verifiable or rationally credible.

Next, Heumann reviews the specific benefits of philosophical historiography. The first point of interest here too is of a negative kind, and consists of the rejection of the principle of authority, "which blinds the majority of men and hinders them from understanding the truth" (I, p. 19). The call to independence and freedom of thought became the banner under which all eighteenth-century culture rallied in its struggle against pedantry and sectarianism.

The philosophical viewpoint that guarantees these presuppositions is eclecticism, to which, as we have seen, the history of philosophy is necessarily linked; in fact, it eliminates the prejudice of authority and makes it possible to acquire a critical mentality: "We learn from the history of philosophy that all philosophers are human and can err; therefore it is foolish to put one's trust in a single philosopher and to hand over one's reason as a prisoner in submission to him. Lipsius put it very well: "The schools arose gradually, which is the usual fate for wisdom that is growing old and, I would almost say, is a little mad". Thus we find that eclectic philosophy is the best form of philosophy, in fact, I would also say that no one deserves the name of philosopher save the eclectic. On the contrary, anyone who is not versed in *historia philosophica* enslaves his own reason to the authority of a particular philosopher and, faithfully following the master, Aristotle for example, is no longer able to see the light. He claims that only Aristotle was wise and fears that it would be a sin to contradict him to wish to be wiser than he was" (I, pp. 20–21). Here, faith in reason is reflected in an appeal to use it practically and not to close one's eyes in a convenient attitude of submission to authority, as many Aristotelians still did, thus acting in contradiction to the authentic teaching of their master: "Aristotle did well to make use of the light of his own reason and to seek the truth. The followers of his school praise him for this. But God has given eyes to us too. Why do we foolishly want to close our eyes and blindly follow a single guide?" (I, p. 22).

The history of philosophy is a useful starting point for philosophical research, as it shows the best method to follow. If Cartesians had been more expert in *historia philosophica*, they would not have been so exclusively engaged in questions of nature and would have also applied themselves to moral philosophy. In fact, Cartesianism needs a Socratic reform (*einer Socratischen Correktion*). Moreover, Aristotle's example persuades us to attribute greater importance to logic, a real

Ariadne's thread, which leads us successfully out of the labyrinth of many differing opinions (I, p. 31). The history of philosophy leads us to understand the texts on which our learning should be based. In this way one learns that the *Enchiridion* of Epictetus is more useful than all the works of Plato for anyone interested in moral philosophy.

However, all of these results are conditioned by the historian's ability to appraise the contents and value of the various philosophies properly; this requires a philosophical mind and training and implies that the historian of philosophy has to be a philosopher: "What clearly follows from this is that nobody who is not himself a philosopher can discuss and teach *historia philosophica* in the correct way. This type of history still has many defects because the majority of those who have written it, such as Vossius, Hornius, Stanley et al., were philologists rather than philosophers (*mehr Philologi als Philosophi gewesen sind*). However, we are quite right to distinguish between the 'history of philosophy' (*historiam philosophiae*) and 'philosophical history' (*historiam philosophicam*). But a correct 'history of philosophy' ought also to be 'philosophical', that is to say, one should examine everything from its foundations, both the 'truth of facts' and the 'truth of dogmas'. And here one can criticize the common prejudice that the historian is not allowed to express his own judgement freely (*Und darff man sich hierbey das gemeine Vorurtheil nicht hindern lassen, als wenn nemlich einem Historico nicht frey stünde, sein judicium beyzufügen*), an unfounded opinion that Le Clerc rightly rejected" (I, pp. 34–35). The distinction between the "history of philosophy" and "philosophical history", which emerges in a polemical comparison with earlier historiography, serves to characterize the two aspects of historical research that should, according to the author, be integrated. The first expresses the strictly historical point of view and relates to the accurate and philological reconstruction of the lives and teachings of the philosophers. A reconstruction of this kind should then become "philosophical" through a search for its foundations (*die Gründe*) which support and demonstrate the truth of both the facts and the dogmas. Because of this, the historian's judgement, which, in Heumann's opinion, cannot be renounced, ends up by being "philosophically" grounded; it is obliged to compare the value of each teaching with the truth, which thus becomes the authentic measure and discriminating criterion of philosophical historiography. Thus one must proceed in a philosophical way (*philosophice*) and not only by historical criteria. In the end, a true history of philosophy should be also a "philosophical history".[8]

[8]This distinction was mentioned again in the review of the modern edition of Diogenes Laertius: "Denn ein anders ist *historia philosophiae* oder *philosophorum*, ein anders *historia philosophica*; wie ich schon in dem ersten Capitel meiner Einleitung § XVII, erinnert habe. Gleichwie auch ein anders ist *sententia Philosophi*, ein anders *sententia philosophica* oder, wie Gellius redet, *philosopha*. Ebenermassen ist ein grosser Unterschied *inter vitam philosophi* und *vitam philosophicam*, inter *uxorem philosophi* und *uxorem philosophicam*, u.d.g. denn das heisset *historia philosophica*, eine Historie, die recht philosophisch gemacht ist, das ist, in welcher nicht nur die Wahrheit der Erzehlungen gründlich untersuchet, und die Fabeln ausgemertzet werden, sondern darinnen man auch der Leute Thun und Meynungen *philosophice* untersuchet, so dass man bey jenem die eigentlichen Absichten nebst denen angewandten Mitteln genau entdecket, bey diesen

Among the many other benefits of the history of philosophy Heumann emphasizes its contribution to a better understanding of the links between philosophy and the Christian religion. On this subject he expresses an extremely positive opinion of Greek philosophy: it prepared the way for the coming of Christianity because it freed mankind from the errors of atheism and the darkness of superstition. The Christian religion is perfectly valid on the rational level; it was only prejudice that prevented the philosophers from adhering to Christianity when the latter began to spread: "It will be very worthwhile for our religion if it can demonstrate that the only reason why the philosophers have not yet come to know Gospel truth is their negligence, that is to say the fact that they have not examined it and have condemned the *doctores* of Christianity without even knowing them (*incognita causa*). It is in fact very probable that if the philosophers had researched the foundations of Christian teachings, they would have understood their truth sufficiently and accepted them openly. As a matter of fact, our religion is rational, and just as gold is not afraid of the furnace, so our religion does not fear the closest scrutiny, but endures trials, and triumphs over all its critics" (I, p. 60).

The use of the history of philosophy is made much more interesting by this affirmation of the correspondence of Christianity with rationality. By comparing the doctrines that he has been able to construct himself with the truth that comes to us from Revelation, man finds a confirmation of the value of reason, the sure guide for his entire life.

6.2.6. *Philosophy and the history of philosophy*

With this discussion on research and the definition of the purpose of the history of philosophy, we come to the heart of historiographical theory. When speaking of the history of "philosophy" it is above all necessary to know what "philosophy" is, in order to have a rule by which to judge what is worth including in this history, a methodological criterion for separating what is philosophical from what is not: "If we have not in fact clarified the ambivalence of the terms [viz. wisdom and philosophy], we find ourselves in a labyrinth and do not know whether we should turn right or left" (I, p. 64).

It is not possible to include in the list of philosophers all those who have been called philosophers at different periods, since one would have to include every area of learning: in antiquity the Seven Wise Men, orators, poets, moral philosophers, and physicists were all called philosophers; for the Christians of the first centuries the Church Fathers and the saints, who loved the true wisdom, were philosophers; in modern times so are professors in the faculty of philosophy, even if they are experts in history or mathematics.

The best way to throw light on *historia philosophica* is to start from a definition of philosophy that grasps its essence and can be applied at any time as a criterion and measure of comparison with the many expressions of culture that are philosophical

---

aber die *origines errorum*, wie auch die consequentien, einer jeden Meynung, deduciret: und was sonsten nach ein *Philosophus*, wenn er die Historie tractiret, in acht nimmet" (I, pp. 343–344).

in name only: "After examining the ambiguity of the word 'philosophy' we should pause to understand what *historia philosophica* has taken its name from and give a clearer concept of it than we did in the previous chapter. In short, we wish to show what the essence and the entire concept of philosophy consists of. In fact, when we have given it the correct foundation, we shall easily be able to express a sound judgement on the presumed philosophers. On the contrary, if we have no idea of what philosophy is, we cannot make good use of the history of philosophy nor construct it appropriately" (I, pp. 93–94).

The concept of wisdom is included in that of philosophy, since the philosopher is "a man who has sought wisdom", and this is the "science of things that are useful to man and make him happy" (I, p. 94), a definition with which reason and revelation, Socrates (*bona malaque distinguere*) and the Bible (*eine Erkäntniss des Guten und des Bösen*) are in accord. Heumann goes on to distinguish wisdom of human origin, which is acquired with reason, from wisdom of divine origin, which is the result of revelation. But not all rational or acquired wisdom is philosophical: in fact, it can be poor and simple (*schlecht und einfältig; empirica)* when it is unable to prove in depth what it knows (*mit tieffsinnigen demonstrationibus*); or erudite and solid (*gelehrt und gründlich; scientifica*) when there is a complete and solid understanding of good and evil. Thus what sets philosophy apart is the use of principles and proofs; this is why it is defined as "research and study of useful truths in accordance with solid foundations and principles" (*eine Untersuchung und Erforschung nützlicher Wahrheiten aus festen Gründen und principiis*: I, p. 95).[9]

This definition of philosophy leads to a new division of its parts which, following Thomasius's schema,[10] are fundamentally two, namely logic and ethics. The first prepares the mind for the search for truth, the second aims to improve the will. The other disciplines included within philosophy are subordinate to ethics and are listed as jurisprudence, politics, anthropology and medicine, and theology. Thus philosophy is a practical science and coincides with ethics: "it certainly does not

[9]This definition of philosophy, with its appeal to usefulness, goes back to Thomasius: "I define philosophy as an intellectual attitude that through the light of nature examines God, creation, and the natural and moral actions of men, and seeks their causes in order to be of use to the human race" (Thomasius, *Intr. ad phil. aulicam*, p. 58). This attention to the formal aspect of philosophy as a demonstrative science and hence distinct from simple empirical knowledge, seems, on the other hand, to go back to the school of Leibniz and Wolff. The distinction suggested by Heumann between simple knowledge and scientific knowledge corresponds to the division found in Wolff between historical knowledge (*cognitio historica*) and philosophical knowledge (*cognitio philosophica*): "Who does not see a great difference here? Knowledge of the mere fact and knowledge of the reasons for that fact are not at all the same thing" (Cf. Ch. Wolff, *Philosophia rationalis sive Logica*, Verone, 1735, p. 2).

[10]Here Thomasius' teaching is repeated word for word: "Of the three parts of philosophy as defined by the Ancients, that is, logic, physics, and moral philosophy, I reckon that physics is not essential for the teacher, except for the doctrine of man; on the other hand he has very great need of logic, because he has to explain the foundations of every argument and perfect his own intellect, and in the same way he needs the philosophy of morals or ethics, and of politics, because they should show him the rule on the basis of which he can live honestly, pleasantly, usefully or, in a word, happily" (Thomasius, *Intr. ad phil. aulicam*, "Praefatio", p. 3).

stop at theory and pure speculation; but in everything it turns to praxis" (*sich in allen Dingen zur Praxi wende*: I, p. 100), Socrates is the model of the true philosopher, the father of philosophy as Cicero put it.

By applying the concept of philosophy illustrated above to philosophical historiography, it is now possible to list the real philosophers. Heumann's main objective was not, however, to restrict the range of the history of philosophy, but to bring into the light of reason all those areas that a long tradition had accepted uncritically as an expression of the philosophical spirit. A pure mathematician is not a true philosopher, nor, even less, were those who applied themselves to astrology and other pagan sciences: "In a word, those who, driven only by curiosity (*scire ut scias*) to enquire into physics, astronomy, or algebra and also into the foolishness of alchemy and astrology, are not philosophers. But this is not a reason for leaving them out of *historia philosophica*; they should be mentioned, partly, especially in the case of the last mentioned, so that one can see how far false philosophy has extended its realm, and partly because those referred to earlier certainly spoke of philosophy, though not in a philosophical way" (I, p. 101). The use that one can gain from it is better than any other motivation of a theoretical type, to the point of accepting into *historia philosophica*, as we shall see, even the philosophy of the Barbarians which, when its foundations are rigorously examined, is revealed to be philosophically false.

The definition of philosophy leads, by contrast, to a description of pseudo-philosophy. Heumann laid great emphasis on this point in order to make the historian fully aware of his task of making judgements. A philosophy is false if it offers odds and ends of pointless speculations, as did Scholastic metaphysics, the queen of sciences "but vain and useless", like their logic "in which the art of syllogism is obscured by subtleties so difficult and complicated that what could be learnt very well in an hour can only be grasped with difficulty in a year" (I, p. 185). Leibniz's project of a combinatorial art is also to be rejected since it is based on "clever tricks". Finally, the arts of divination, onirology, chiromancy, and astrology, which are the "misbegotten offspring of paganism" are totally useless.

Secondly, what is based on the authority of one man or of tradition is not true philosophy. True philosophy is not that of a philosophical school but eclectic philosophy, which has the strength and courage to make use of its own reason. In order to contrast the different situations in greater depth, Heumann takes up the distinction suggested by Epictetus between the *philosophus* and the *interpres philosophi*: a philosopher seeks truth itself and confirms it with solid foundations. The *interpres* accepts the opinions of his philosopher *ita dicti* (as spoken) together with their reasons, and in his turn he passes them on to the disciples. A philosopher is a rational man (*ein vernünfftiger Man*), the *interpres* on the other hand keeps his reason prisoner in obedience to his philosopher. A philosopher regards other philosophers as his equals and accepts or rejects their principles according to whether he finds them strong or weak; the *interpres* on the other hand considers his philosopher as a dictator and possesses neither the right of choosing nor the right of refuting. The *interpres* respects his Rabbi, his Father of his Church of Philosophy; the philosopher, on the contrary, does not recognize any Rabbi or Father, but regards other philosophers as his brothers who cannot command him in any way. Philosophers are made, not born

(*Philosophi fiunt, non nascuntur*), that is to say they have to use their brain and seek the truth very carefully if they want to become philosophers worthy of the name. *Sed interpretes Philosophorum nascuntur, non fiunt*; that is to say, if they are born in the "church" of Aristotle they are Aristotelians, if in that of the Cartesians or Platonists, they are Cartesians or Platonists. A philosopher is a man of great judgement (*vir magni judicii*), the *interpres* of a philosopher, on the contrary, is a man of useful memory (*homo beatae memoriae*). It is said of a philosopher that he weighs up and assesses opinions, he does not count them (*Ponderat suffragia, non numerat*); an *interpres* however, says: "I prefer to err with Aristotle rather than judge correctly with the others" (I, pp. 194–195). The emergence of the eclectic point of view and the reconquest of the freedom of thought, in contrast not only to the ancient schools but also to the sectarianism of Descartes, were for Heumann, as they were for the philosophers of Thomasius's circle, a symbol of the progress of philosophy and of the complete development of reason in the eighteenth century.

The third element of false philosophy is superstition. As has been seen in the previous section, there is perfect accord between religion and philosophy, since rational truth, like revealed truth, derives from God as the "reminder (*reliquia*) of the divine image". The relationship between philosophy and religion is not, as it was for the Pietist Zierold, the connection that existed in the Bible between Hagar and Sarah, between the slave woman and the wife of Abraham, but that between Rachel and Leah, sisters and both of them wives of Jacob. Superstition, on the other hand, opposes reason with all its power: "The sun of reason and blind superstition cannot reign under the same sky, but it is said: 'You will be the one and only king'. Here in short is the situation. Superstition is foolishness (*eine Thorheit*) and it has as much in common with wisdom as darkness with light. Furthermore, the mother of superstition is ignorance (*die Unwissenheit*)" (I, pp. 205–206).

On the level of historiography, the application of this principle creates new perspectives and interpretations that are perfectly in line with the rationalist and anti-Catholic spirit of the German Enlightenment: philosophy was born in Greece and cultivated by men who were not priests – Greek philosophers were not pagans but "naturalists".[11] The cause of the decline of philosophy in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. was not the barbarian invasions but the spread of superstition; the rebirth of philosophical studies was made possible by the Protestant Reformation.

[11] The ancient philosophers, being enemies of superstition, cannot be called "pagans". Heumann called them "naturalists", borrowing the term from the *Adeisidaernon* of John Toland but without the polemical connotation that the term had for Toland, for whom even Christianity was to a great extent reduced to superstition: "Es sind nemlich die Naturalisten in zwo Classen einzutheilen. Etliche werden aus blinden Heyden Naturalisten durch Hülffe der Philosophie, welche ihnen die Augen öffnet, und sie von der Abgötterey befreyet. Etliche aber werden aus Christen Naturalisten durch unvernünfftige Schlüsse, nach welchen sie sich einbilden, dass die Christliche Religion sowohl erdichtetes Wesen sey, als das Heydenthum. Die ersten kommen aus der Finsterniss zum Lichte, die andern aus dem Lichte zur Finsterniss. Die ersten sind weise; die andern sind Thoren. Die ersten suchen das Licht, und finden es auch; die andern aber verlassen die helle Sonne, und folgen dem Jrrliche ihres mit Bossheit oder falschen *praejudiciis* bezauberten Verstandes" (I, p. 217).

Barbarian philosophy was false in that it was closely connected to superstition; those who practised it were in fact priests. In Greece, the political conditions for the birth of philosophy were created with the establishment of a republican regime: "As far as the first point is concerned, in the barbarian countries the monarchical regime was very detrimental to philosophy. In fact, it was easy for the pagan priests to bewitch an individual man (i.e. the king), to such an extent with their hypocrisies and tricks performed in the name of the gods that if philosophy should oppose them and should wish to put their affairs in danger, [. . .] it was easy to shift the name atheist to the philosophers and with this accusation throw them into the sea. But in the free Greek republics it was not possible to be in opposition in the same way. There were too many heads and the priestly class could not always agree among themselves. A philosopher might himself be suspected or hated by this or that powerful man, but he would find another to be his protector, who would defend him according to his capabilities and would preserve his freedom to philosophize" (I, pp. 212–213). The form of government directly affects philosophical speculation: only in the free Greek republics was it possible for philosophy, which is by its nature free rational research and cannot bear any form of restriction, to emerge.[12]

The conflict between philosophy and superstition offers a solid argument against the barbarism of Scholasticism.[13] Philosophical historiography, like political historiography, had shown that the cause of the decline of learning and of the end of Ancient culture was the barbarian invasions. Heumann considered them to be subsidiary causes: the principal was the spread of monasticism, which propagated superstition and hatred of philosophy throughout the West (I, p. 218). The corruption of religion led to the crisis of philosophy: "As superstition had once again taken up

[12] According to Heumann, the experience of modern philosophy confirmed this connection: philosophical research developed first in England and Holland and then in Prussia, that is, in the countries where freedom of thought was most securely guaranteed. The author's view can be seen in *Conspectus Reipublicae litterariae,* 5nd edn. (Hanover, 1746): "This wonderful growth of philosophy took place thanks to the freedom to philosophize encouraged in Holland and Britain; from these regions books full of wisdom were spread to other regions, opening the eyes of many, and especially of the Germans, for whom King Frederick II of Prussia had opened a very free school of philosophy. But the wisdom coming from Halle spread its light to the other parts of Germany too, and now the professors are ashamed to believe and teach things that in the memory of our fathers it was considered sacred to believe and teach" (pp. 175–176).

[13] The theme is developed in more detail in an article in the *Acta philosophorum* with the significant title: "Von der Catholischen Philosophie" (II, pp. 281–301), and later in the "Preface" to the re-edition of Tribbechow's *De doctoribus scholasticis* (Jena, 1719). Scholastic philosophy was called philosophy incorrectly since its exclusive aim was the defence of Papal power and superstition: "There is no doubt that the Scholastics were holy men or, to use their own vocabulary, clerics, and for the most part monks, but they were so blinded by their superstition that they considered their own religion to be absolutely perfect and firmly believed that there was no fault in their theological beliefs. For this reason they never subjected their theological opinions to examination, even considering that the very desire to examine religion was instigated by Satan and was a sin deserving the severest punishment" (p. xvi). Heumann's interpretation in the context of the devaluation of medieval philosophy from Humanism to the Enlightenment is recorded by M. De Wulf, *Histoire de la philosophie médiévale*, Vol. I (Louvaine-Paris, 1934), p. 10.

residence and in consequence had corrupted true Christian religion to its very foundations, philosophy too was extinguished. In fact, the 'philosophy' of the monastery bore this name without authority, like a virgin deflowered. Just as the barbarian philosophers had made use of religion simply in order to make their superstition flourish, so the philosophy of the monks had no other aim than that of maintaining the honour of despicable Popery and of offering it support again and again, until within Popery, as within paganism, some men who were not priests and thus had not made any profit from these errors, dragged philosophy out of the dust. Therefore the opinion that considers the *instauratio litterarum*, attributed to Erasmus and others who were not monks, to be the precursor of Luther's reform, is to be considered correct. Once the Christian religion had been restored to its purity, philosophy began to wake up and gradually to recover its strength. So it is clear where philosophers will be found: little philosophy will be found in countries that still venerate the Baal of Rome, while on the contrary people do philosophy correctly among the Protestants" (I, pp. 220–221). Given the connection between philosophy and true religion, the Protestant Reformation also signifies the reform of philosophical studies and the overthrow of Scholasticism. This idea, already present in the philosophical historiography of the early eighteenth century (Ch. Thomasius, Zierold, Buddeus) found complete justification in the "Einleitung", both in its appeal to the concept of "philosophy" and in the historical parallel of medieval philosophy with the speculation of the Eastern peoples.

The application to the history of philosophy of interpretative categories deriving from the definition of philosophy and its characteristics opened up interesting historical perspectives and offered the possibility of a re-reading of the past more relevant to the taste and demands of the philosophical culture of the period, which found a historical justification and an opportunity to further develop its own arguments.

6.2.7. *The Origin and Progress of Philosophy and the Theory of Genius*

After conceptually determining the subject of the history of philosophy, Heumann set about to find the historical categories that would explain the origins and conditions of the development of philosophy. Reason is not excluded from this analysis; indeed it offers a criterion of interpretation that gives a unitary meaning to the course of history. At the basis of ideas concerning the origin of philosophy lies the distinction between simple or empirical wisdom and erudite or scientific wisdom, and the conviction that only the latter can be defined as "philosophy" in the true sense of the word. The positive nature of the early type of wisdom is not denied, for if its aim was the attainment of virtue, as with the ancient Hebrews, it is to be preferred to many vain kinds of speculation. But there is a profound difference between *philosophia vitae* and *philosophia scholae*: "The latter moves *in universalibus* and is concerned with many abstractions. The former, on the other hand, reasons *circa singularia* and philosophizes about things that happen in everyday life. Abraham, Salomon, and Sirach often consulted their own reason when they wished to do this or that, or to advise someone, even though they did not carry out their reasoning according to the school method, and even less did they organize their 'principles' with their 'conclusions' into a proper 'system' in a disciplined way"

(I, p. 624). If we wish to call them philosophers, we must add that they were empirical philosophers; they cannot possibly be compared with the Greeks, with whom philosophy reached its most authentic form, becoming a demonstrative and abstract science.

In the "Einleitung", the question of the origin of philosophy is presented in a different way from the way it is by Buddeus and Zierold. The idea of the derivation of all wisdom, and hence all philosophy, from God, is refuted, as is the opinion that the Eastern peoples possessed an arcane wisdom more profound than that of the Greeks, and that the Greeks obtained their teachings from them. As we have seen, philosophy is "acquired wisdom", a conquest by man, who with the power of reason and the help of a method seeks truth for the sake of individual and social good. In this sense, philosophy came to light in Greece, where it was encouraged by certain external conditions such as political freedom. However, philosophy does have a prehistory among the Hebrews and the Eastern peoples, and it is here that the origin of the other sciences and a form of pre-philosophical speculation, aimed exclusively at the particular and not yet daring to rise to the universal, can be found.

In the eastern Mediterranean basin, there was an intense cultural life, the principal fruit of which was the birth and gradual development of the sciences. The historical framework is interpreted in a progressive sense. Science does not appear unexpectedly, but is preceded by art, which relates directly to experience and the necessities of life. For example, the Egyptians were driven to develop geometry by their material needs; yet they did not understand it *per modum scientiae*, that is to say they did not possess the *rationes*, but simply kept the conclusions in mind empirically and applied them. Art precedes science; it is not born from theory but from experience. Subsequently, however, "art smoothed the way for science, and man was gradually driven to search for the foundations and *rationes* of the arts and therefore also to philosophize" (I, p. 272). Three factors were at work in this process: necessity (*die Nothwendigkeit*), the origin of geometry, astronomy and medicine; superstition (*die Superstition*), which generated astrology, chiromancy, and the other sciences of divination, and finally curiosity (*die Curiosität*), which impelled man to seek the unknown causes of phenomena and was the determining factor in the birth of philosophy: "It is natural for man, like hunger and thirst. In fact, just as the body finds pleasure in eating and drinking, so knowledge is the nourishment of the spirit, which is hungry for it and cannot rest until the appetite is satisfied by learning" (I, p. 276).

Curiosity brings men to the use of reason, leading them to the threshold of philosophy, but their speculation does not become philosophy *stricto sensu*, since it bypasses morality and extends only *in particularibus*: "We should observe that nothing becomes perfect all at once, but just as childhood and weakness always go together, so philosophy was very imperfect (*sehr unvollkommen*) in its early years. Its imperfection lay in two points. Firstly, people began to philosophize to satisfy their own curiosity rather than to promote true happiness (*die wahre Glückseligkeit*), that is to say both internal happiness of the mind, and external happiness of the State. Thus arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and physics flourished, but morality and politics were neglected. For this reason we have defined this first point as *stultitia erudita*. Secondly, philosophy was still *particularis* and not *universalis* or

systematica; I mean that, for example, in physics they jumped from one question to another and based their speculation on this, but had not yet constructed a *corpus disciplinae* or *disciplinarum* in which one could see all the elements in a complete form without any flaws" (I, pp. 281–282). The two essential characteristics of philosophy, usefulness and system, were not fulfilled, but they were, on the contrary, found among the Greeks.

Bringing together all these observations, Heumann illustrates very effectively the stages in the birth of philosophy and its continued maturing in the form of Aristotelian philosophy: "In order to avoid any confusion and homonymy we need to describe the origin of philosophy in steps. With the ancient Hebrews we find the origin not of philosophy in the strict sense but rather of spontaneous and naïve wisdom. In Chaldea and in Egypt, but especially in the latter, all kinds of art and learning were practised, but not the *studium philosophicum*. It was the Greeks who first launched their reasoning towards the heavens and began to philosophize. However, at the beginning they philosophized only *particulariter*, then with time they also did it *systematice* and finally both *universaliter* and *systematice*, or, in a word, *pansophice*. Philosophy was passed down to the Christians who, as they had a perfectly pure religion and a divine revelation, were superior in wisdom to the most learned Greek philosophers" (I, p. 290). The growth of philosophy is interpreted as a gradual increase in its speculative capabilities until it becomes *pansophia*, a perfectly clear understanding that reaches every area of learning with a systematic and exhaustive explanation.

The path taken by philosophy is similar in its phases to the evolution of the life of man. Heumann distinguishes three ages: childhood, youth, and maturity.[14] The first phase (*die Kindheit*) is represented by the Ionics who, motivated by curiosity, searched for truth in the field of natural experience, without any order; then came Socrates and Plato (*die Jugend*), who not only gave priority to ethics, but proposed to treat the various parts of philosophy in a systematic way; finally came Aristotle (*das männliche Alter*) who, as he was in possession of logic, was able to give philosophical discipline a complete form. The *Genealogie des studii philosophici* is illustrated in this way: "The Greeks were driven to philosophy mainly by curiosity. Therefore they directed their speculation towards physical reality only, wishing to study the causes of this or that effect. The history of the Ionic philosophers confirms this quite well. They too made such notable progress in this research that we can recognize from the fragments remaining that they had gradually developed physics into a systematic form. After they had diligently sought the wisdom that comes merely from curiosity, useful truth, that is wisdom, revealed itself to them a little at a time, though at first in a single, ingenuous garb. In fact, we find in the history of the Ancient Greeks that not only the Ionic philosophers but also the Seven Wise Men and others said very fine things, aiming at a wise and virtuous life and thus at the

[14]The use of the image of the life of man to interpret the history of humanity was re-emerging in the polemic between the ancients and the moderns during the seventeenth century; in philosophical historiography it was used by Villemandy who in turn referred to Bacon's *De dignitate et augmentis scientiarum* (cf above, Chapter 1, para 1.4).

true happiness of man. Finally, Socrates appeared, and he not only preferred morals to physics, practical to theoretical philosophy, but, impelled by a healthy spirit of emulation, turned his attention to transforming simple wisdom into erudite wisdom. Furthermore, he had a great host of disciples, the most learned of whom was Plato. Plato ventured into other disciplines too, although his way of speaking was more that of an orator than a philosopher. In fact, he did not have any logic. For that reason Aristotle was able to undertake the task better, since he was interested in the *fundamenta demonstrationum* because he recognized that it was the organ of all philosophy. He advanced so far that he deserved the title of *Polyhistor* or *Pansophus* or *Philosophus universalis* as is demonstrated by the writings he left us on every discipline" (I, pp. 292–293).

It is interesting to point out the dynamic and progressive aspect of this historical outlook, outside the usual schema of the derivation of the schools. The subject of the history of philosophy is the historical destiny of philosophy in its entirety, leaving the fortune of particular teachings or schools out of consideration. The results of a historical analysis carried out in these terms are of immediate interest for historical research. The reader comes to understand the best and most appropriate form of philosophy that should inspire him; as clearly appears, this is the Aristotelian form because of the function it assigns to logic as an organ of philosophy.

Another useful aspect is the description of the conditions of historical research, that is, the background and external factors which make progress possible. The first positive condition is leisure and freedom from material want. The mind must be free from contingent preoccupations; the ideal condition for the philosopher is that of the monk, who having nothing, lacks nothing (*cum nihil habenti nihil deest*). The presence of good books is an effective stimulus because "he who has to travel along a clear road proceeds more easily than he who has to move stones and bushes out of his way" (I, p. 303); the great flowering of studies in the modern era was to a great extent made possible by the invention of printing, which permitted the publication of so many fine books in every discipline, so that if Thales or Socrates were born again they would rush to the library and become educated.

This investigation of the historical and environmental factors is not enough on its own to explain the progress of philosophy; a wide variety of systems, and profound differences between philosophers, can be found in identical historical conditions. The differences are due to the intelligence of each philosopher, that is, the particular nature of his mind (*ingenium*), which may be more or less capable of seeking and finding the truth. Not all can become Aristotle; *philosophi nascuntur*, even though much practice and serious application are needed. Thus, a psychological concept, such as that of genius (*ingenium*), becomes a historiographical category for interpreting the greatness of the philosophers and the characteristics of their various teachings.[15]

[15]The subject was developed by Heumann in his *Conspectus Reipublicae litterariae* in relation to literary studies and hence also to philosophy. There are two factors that can explain the rise and development of these areas of study, one external, namely historical and environmental circumstances (*ab opportunitate temporis*), the other internal, namely the particular nature of the mind

After defining philosophical genius as a *facultas sapiendi*, that is, the natural capacity to perceive what is true and false and to become wise, Heumann observes that everyone has the ability to reach wisdom, but not everyone can become a philosopher, that is, possess the particular wisdom, rational and demonstrative, that is philosophy. There is, in fact, a profound diversity in this *facultas sapiendi* which, although it is natural to man, is like the sense of sight which functions to different degrees in individual people: "just as with physical eyes one person sees more sharply and further than another and someone has the keen vision of the lynx, while another can recognise only nearby objects, so the same thing happens with genius: one has a weak genius, another a strong one; Tom or Dick has a slow mind, Harry a quick one" (I, p. 577).[16]

Furthermore, Heumann distinguishes passive from active minds: the former knows only how to preserve the teachings it has received faithfully, while the second searches for truth by its own efforts. However, there are two types of active minds, *ingenia spuria* and *ingenia vera*, according to whether they work by imagination or reason. Thus we have a three-fold division of the mind, corresponding exactly to the three faculties of the spirit: memory, imagination, and reason: "We have three forms of intelligence: some people have a good memory but little judgement, others have an imagination so strong that it suffocates judgement, and finally, others have an acute and penetrating sense of judgement. If the first apply themselves to philosophy they become sectarians, like the Scholastics. The second become fanatics and enthusiasts, like Böhme, Kuhlmann, and others. The third, on the other hand, become true philosophers. The last group see with their own eyes; the first look with the spectacles of others; the second imagine all sorts of things and suppose that they see, but in reality they keep their eyes closed" (I, pp. 582–583).

Moreover, true philosophers can be subdivided into two classes, of first and second degrees of greatness: the latter type, while able to search for the truth with reason, need the support and advice of their masters. The former, on the other hand, shine with their own light; they penetrate the depths of truth on their own, overcoming all obstacles including the *praejudicium religionis*: "a mind of the first

---

(*ab ingeniorum varietate):* "It is a matter of temporal circumstances that at one time astronomy in particular flourished among the Chaldeans, that very fine orators appeared in free Greece, that on the basis of the testimony of our fathers the Reformed theologians who lived in France studied dogmatic theology and church history more thoroughly than others, and that today in our land of Germany, and at least in the Protestant universities, public law is treated carefully, that in the past many learned commentaries on Aristotle were published [. . .]. As to the variety of types of mind, in similar circumstances a man may zealously gather into one volume what he finds in six hundred books by authors both ancient and modern, while another works on moral philosophy and relates methodically everything that he observes on the subject, and yet another digs deeply into any discipline and applies himself first to one and then to another" (*Conspectus Reipublicae litterariae*, Hanover, 1746, p. 242).

[16]The theme of genius is also found in Buddeus, *Exercitatio de cultura ingenii* (Halle, 1699; The Hague, 1765). Of particular interest is ch. II (pp. 39–81), in which the author asks: "Which people are fit to develop their minds? And first of all, are whole nations to be excluded?" Cf. also S.F. Weitzmann, *Dissertatio philosophica de ingenio ad philosophandum nato* (Jena, 1721).

magnitude is expected to produce new truths from its own principles, particularly truths opposed to opinions that are current and in a certain sense canonized. These new truths are like the offspring of the greater philosophers, who can show them and declare: *Stirps haec progeniesque mea est* (Ovid)" (I, p. 589).

The category of "genius" (*ingenium*) when applied to the field of historiography, offers new criteria of interpretation. The Scholastics and Pythagoreans, for whom the principle *ipse dixit* was important, were characterized by a passive genius. An active but false genius is typical of mystics, fanatics, and in general all of the Platonists, "as Plato cultivated his imagination more than his judgement (*mehr Phantasie, als Judicium*)" (I, p. 583). Philosophical spirits of the second degree were Erasmus, Melancthon, Bayle, Hobbes, Le Clerc, and Grotius. Among the geniuses of the first degree the true lights (*lumina*) of the world of philosophy shine out: Aristotle in antiquity and Ch. Thomasius in the modern era. The place given to Thomasius is not surprising: he was still alive, and his function as an intellectual guide in early eighteenth-century Germany was, as we have seen, universally recognised.[17] Heumann considered him to be the real reformer of philosophy of his age, and compared his work with that of Luther: "What Luther did in the reform of theology, Thomasius has now done in the reform of philosophy. And just as one can rightly maintain that Luther was a Thomasius in theology, we shall briefly show that Thomasius has been a Luther in philosophy. Who can deny that he has attacked current errors and pedantry with great courage, has fought against the prejudices of both Aristotelians and Cartesians with effective weapons, and has brought logic and ethics, and also *jus naturae*, into a form that is totally original but also truly beautiful?" (I, p. 609).[18]

This analysis of the human genius is not only descriptive. Heumann tackles the basic problem by asking what is the origin of the philosophical intellect. There is one aspect which is natural, while another depends on application and practice; it is necessary to unite nature with diligence, "because without the latter the former does not attain the desired effect, but without the former the latter, so to speak, talks wildly and does not produce useful fruit" (I, p. 611). The concept of "nature" is defined more precisely by searching for factors that might condition it in some

[17] Ch. Thomasius was considered the first real eclectic. See Stolle's *Introductio in rem litterariam*, published in the same year as the "Einleitung" (1718): "It is obvious that we Germans owe much to Thomasius. In fact he was the first to destroy the yoke of Cartesian philosophy and Peripatetic philosophy and all the philosophical sects, from which he set us free. Moreover, no one before him knew how to investigate with such diligence the nature and constitution of the human intellect and the will, and none explained it so well as did Christian Thomasius who was hated by many" (Stolle, p. 515).

[18] The Aristotelian Johann H. von Elswich considered Heumann's comparison of Thomasius with Luther to be excessive and fawning: "I do not deny that in these matters he produced something praiseworthy. But let others, if they so wish, declare that these things are important enough for him to be called another Luther, having made the same contribution to the reform of philosophy as that made by Luther to the reform of theology. As for me, it seems that in this opinion there is more adulation, or, if you prefer, excessive adulation, than the truth justifies" (Elswich, *De varia Aristotelis in scholis protestantium fortuna*, p. 97).

way. The influence of the stars is excluded, as is that of heredity; *ingenium* depends above all on climate. As the author himself recognized, this idea was not original, but had been held since antiquity by the Roman writers;[19] what was new was its use in philosophical historiography.

The influence of climate on genius is clarified by an explanation of a physical and biological nature; it is traced back to a fact that is natural and that can to a certain extent be verified, namely, the movement of the blood, which is in turn related to the movements of the soul: "from this it is easy to conclude that countries where the very cold climate makes the blood sluggish, produce poor quality and passive minds; those, on the other hand, that have an excessively hot climate, produce superficial and over-imaginative minds; finally, those where the climate is temperate can produce good and philosophical minds" (I, p. 633). The temperate countries are those most conducive to philosophical speculation, as is shown by the successful development of modern philosophy in England and Holland; in Italy when there was freedom to philosophize; and even more, in France and Germany. In France the genius is more brilliant, in Germany more solid. By combining the two characteristics, one would produce the Gallico-German temperament, that most suitable for philosophy. In the early eighteenth century, Germany, in search of its own cultural identity, was by now conscious of its role but still looked towards France in order to free herself from pedantry and excessive formalism.[20]

The chapter on genius closes here; it forms an integral part of historiographical theory because of the criteria it offers to historical interpretation. The category of *ingenium* brings us to the area of the subjective factors that determine the development of philosophy. These factors are not personal and unpredictable to the point of making analysis impossible; indeed, the historian can check their foundation, which is of a physical and geographical nature. In this way, the whole history of philosophy becomes liable to analysis in its constituent elements and becomes a science that can be investigated perfectly by the rational inquiry of the historian of philosophy.

6.2.8. *Periodization*

At the end of the "Einleitung", Heumann added a chapter on periodization: "Eintheilung der Historiae philosophicae" (I, pp. 462–472), illustrated by an appropriate table *hors texte*. This question had frequently arisen in historiographical

[19] Heumann refers to the ancients, Gellius and Cicero, but he was no doubt aware of the vast literature on the subject, especially on the theme of national character. The idea of diversity in usages and customs, and in the character of the various peoples, was much talked about in Heumann's time, as a consequence of the great voyages and geographical discoveries. On this subject, and on the diversity of national characteristics cf. Hazard, pp. 53–55 and 385–393.

[20] Heumann admired the cultural liveliness of France, whose position as a guide in Europe was compared with that of Greece in Antiquity: "In their character and customs the Greeks were very similar to the people of present-day France, as can easily be deduced by comparing them. And you could rightly call the city of Paris Athens, and it is even more cultured than ancient Athens. What is happening to the French language is what happened to the Greek language, that its use is not confined within the borders of is own country, but is more or less common to all the inhabitants of Europe" (*Conspectus Reipublicae litterariae*, p. 73).

practice and had nearly always been resolved by accepting the ancient scheme of the sequence of the philosophical schools. Heumann's theorization of the concept of the history of philosophy, and the determination of its dynamic elements in particular now made it possible to re-think the division into periods in new terms, taking historical evolution into account and leaving out the details of particular schools.

The seventeenth century had seen the appearance, beside the genre of *historia philosophica*, of specialized treatises on sects, such as histories of Stoicism and atomism, or on disciplines, such as histories of ethics or morals. Heumann believed it was important to apply himself primarily to general history which, by following chronological order, shows the progress of philosophy from the beginning of the world and among all peoples: "The latter is the best method because it is universal and because it is then easy to draw from such a *historia philosophica* the specialized history (*die Special-Histoire*) of a particular discipline and to portray it on its own. The history of the church is treated in the same way: it is first described in chronological and geographical order, after which it takes little effort to write detailed histories of the Church councils, heresies, Popes etc" (I, pp. 462–463).

The comparison with Church history is not accidental; the periodization of philosophy reflects in its general lines that used in Church history. The Protestant historians added to the two traditional periods, the Old and New Testament, the third period that began with the Reformation. In the same way, Heumann divided philosophy into Pre-Christian and Post-Christian, and the latter into before and after the Reform of the Church. Two historic events are taken to be discriminant moments in the course of history: the birth of Christ and the Protestant Reformation; thus, on the chronological level there are three main periods; ancient, medieval, and modern.

Within the three main periods, conceptual categories and ethnical and geographical distinctions have greater significance than the chronological criterion. The ancient period is divided into *empirica sive simplex (schlecht und einfältig*) and *scientifica sive theoretica (gelehrt und gründlich*) philosophy. The former, which strictly speaking was not yet philosophy but is included because it contained moments of philosophy, philosophical fragments (*intervalla philosophandi, particulas philosophicas*) is divided into three according to whether it was practised by the Hebrews (*philosophia Hebraeorum*), the Eastern peoples (*philosophia Barbarica*), or the early Greeks (*philosophia Graecanica, Poëtarum, Oratorum, Historicorum, Politicorum*).

Theoretical or scientific philosophy which, as we know, originated in Greece, shows sharply differentiated forms. A first distinction is between the Dogmatics and Sceptics. First there were the Dogmatics: "in fact, *credulitas* is an older woman than *incredulitas*, who is a presumptuous girl who wants to know more than her mother" (I, p. 465). The Dogmatics in their turn can be either eclectics or sectarians; the former, apart from Socrates and Heraclitus, were founders of their own schools. It is only at this point that the division between the philosophical schools appears. However, there are not two directions of thought, Ionic and Italic, as in Laertius, but two plus two according to whether they paid more attention to physics or morals. Among the "physicists" Heumann lists the Ionics and Eleatics, and among the

"moralists" the Italics or Pythagoreans and the Socratics (Cyrenaics, the school of Elis, Megarians, Cynics, Stoics, Academics, and Peripatetics).

The middle period lies between the two events of the birth of Christ and the Reformation, and therefore includes both the philosophy of the period of the Roman Empire and medieval thought: Pagans, Hebrews, Muslims and Christians. The first revived the Greek schools, but particularly loved Plato; however, their ideas differed from early primitive Platonism, as also from the scepticism of the Academy; hence Vossius gave them the name of *Platonici juniores* (cf. *Models*, I, p. 228). Among the Christians there was an initial attachment to Plato, analogous to what happened in pagan culture; subsequently this was replaced by an increasingly exclusive and paralysing love for Aristotle who ended up by becoming the *Monarcha ingeniorum* of the whole world of philosophy.

Modern philosophy begins with the Protestant Reformation. The renewal of philosophy was preceded and made possible by the renewal of religion, to which we can add the contribution made by the geographical discoveries: "When the light of Reform at last arrived in the sixteenth century, philosophy also had to undergo reform, and at the same time as a new natural world was discovered and made known by Columbus and Vespucci, a new philosophical world emerged" (I, p. 469). However, not all abandoned the Scholastic tradition; the Jesuits (*Scholastici juniores*) continued it, but the majority of philosophers followed a new path. Two directions were established, the "sectarians" and the "eclectics". The former brought back the ancient schools, including that of Aristotle, but they differed from the Scholastics because they had direct knowledge of Aristotle's writings (*Aristotelici puri*). But the typical representatives of modern philosophy are the eclectics, some of whom were founders of philosophical schools (Ramus and Descartes) while others preferred their followers to remain eclectic (Telesio, Hobbes, Ch. Thomasius et al.).

Heumann interprets the spread of eclecticism as a sign of the superiority of modern philosophy, an approach later to be shared by Brucker. After Ramus first broke the ice, "Eclectic philosophy has continued to advance until it has gained predominance in our fortunate age" (I, p. 471). Heumann concludes his historical investigation with this mention of the supremacy of eclectic philosophy, to the success of which, as we have seen, the history of philosophy also contributed, and thanks to which the possibility of further progress for philosophical research had opened up.

6.2.9. *Methodological questions*

One chapter of the "Einleitung" is devoted to the historical method ("De fide historica oder der Glaubwurdigkeit in dieser Historie", I, pp. 392–462). The need for the greatest clarity and for adequate guiding criteria which inspired the philosophical spirit of the Cartesian era is here transferred to the field of history, where there was the most uncertainty. History needed a method which, with reason as its basic criterion, would consist of the art of distinction (*die Scheide-Kunst*), "by means of which one learns to refine the gold of truth from the dross of fables" (I, p. 383).

Heumann holds up Bayle's method as a model of historical research: "Since having no prejudices is an important part of wisdom, history needs to know how to

navigate between the reefs of fables. One of the Labours of Hercules was to clean the great stables of King Augeas; similarly, we expect that intelligent people at least do not condemn or despise our patient work. Why did the *galante Bayle* achieve so much success in the world of learning? Was it not perhaps because he discovered so many errors in *varia historia*? He justified this task amply in his *Projet d'un dictionnaire historique*; I refer the interested reader to this, restricting myself to quoting the words he pronounced almost like an oracle in his *Dictionnaire* (under: 'Jean Evangeliste', note A): 'The compilation of errors is a very useful part of history'" (I, pp. 453–454). If it is true that history is a light, the indispensable guide for proceeding on the path of learning, it was nevertheless necessary, for Heumann as for Bayle, to free it from all doubts, uncertainties, fables and errors, and to give historical study an adequate foundation and justification.

A preliminary problem is whether demonstrations are to be given in history or whether everything in it is open to discussion, capable of reaching a high level of probability but never indubitable certainty. As Heumann observes, Bodin had already given historians the *assensus probabilis*, and modern writers on logic placed historical truths, without distinction, in the class of the verisimilar. This approach, which leads the historian to operate solely in the area of the debatable, does not guarantee the historical disciplines with any scientific basis.[21] If we want history to attain the form of scientific knowledge, we must make use of demonstrations, even if they are of a different nature from those used in the other sciences.

Heumann distinguishes between two fundamental types of demonstration, absolute and hypothetical, the first referring to the context of essences, while the second regards the field of that which exists: "I use the term *demonstratio absoluta* when it is proven that something exists in a necessary way, or necessarily possesses this or that quality, for example that there is a God, that virtue makes man happy, that *socialitas* is not *primum principium justi*. This demonstration is sometimes direct, sometimes indirect; the latter is also called *deductio ad impossibilem et absurdum*. The direct can also be divided into *demonstratio a priori* and *a posteriori*. Among the three truths that I have mentioned, the first is *a posteriori*, the second *a priori*, the third is demonstrated indirectly. On the other hand, I use the term *demonstratio hypothetica* when something did not have to exist in a necessary way nor have to possess this or that quality, yet I can prove that it existed, that it had this or that quality and that it could not have been otherwise. For example, it was not necessary in the sixteenth century that Charles V should be Holy Roman Emperor and that Luther should be a professor at Wittenberg, and that he should free religion

[21] The *Observationes selectae*, the Halle review edited by Buddeus, had firmly denied the title of "demonstrations" to historical propositions: "Those who have considered the question carefully will readily concede that historical truth does not admit demonstrations but is founded only on the probability and supposition of the truth that comes from conjectures which sometimes deceive. In fact, since history is about things in the past or that are not present to us, it follows that one should not expect any infallible certainty, but rather that one should find in history things that are uncertain and dubious, and need to be read prudently and judiciously" ("De incertitudine historica", OS, XI, p. 149).

from the errors that were widespread within it. There was no absolute necessity that his work should result in so many thousands of followers. However, after this happened, it is possible to prove so clearly that it has really happened that the contrary is impossible. How can one refuse to give the name of demonstration to a proof so clear that it does not leave the slightest doubt?" (I, pp. 386–387). As can be seen, the distinction is purely one of logic and concerns the degree of necessity that the various propositions possess. In the first case, relating to the essence of a thing or to the reality of a necessary thing, the demonstration reaches an "absolute" necessity independently of any check in the ambit of the existence of certain conditions. On the other hand, the historical proposition has a "hypothetical" meaning, that is, it is valid only after a certain fact has happened. The certainty of the historical demonstration does not depend on some necessity inherent in the course of history, which turns out to be totally contingent, but derives from the historian's ability to access direct testimonies and irrefutable documentary evidence, which prove the sequence of historical events.[22] Thus the value of sources and the analysis of the validity of evidence, which give history the value of a science, are fundamental to the study of history.

It is not always possible to demonstrate the historical truth of facts with certainty: the results arrived at by the historian by means of his own critical analysis are often disappointing because they lead him to exclude accounts shown to be unlikely or improbable from the field of history. Heumann illustrates the process of historical analysis by an analogy with the practice of law, and, more precisely, with the examination of witnesses in criminal law: "A historian is nothing other than a witness (*ein Zeuge*). Because of this, the historian ought to be examined just as a witness is, before his testimony is accepted. If it stands up to the test, I accept his account as true. But if he goes through the examination like butter in the sun, I dismiss him as a false witness. Two things are required of a good and reliable witness – firstly

[22]Here Heumann had in mind the *Logique* of Port-Royal, both for its reference to the two types of demonstration and for the value of demonstration to be attributed to historical propositions: "La foi humaine est de soi-même sujette à erreur, parce que tout homme est menteur, selon l'Ecriture, et qu'il se peut faire que celui qui nous assûrera une chose come veritable sera lui-même trompé. Et neanmoins, ainsi que nous avons déja marqué ci-dessus, il y a des choses que nous ne connoissons que par une foi humaine, que nous devons tenir pour aussi certaines et aussi indubitables, que si nous en avions des demonstrations mathematiques: comme ce que l'on sait par une relation constante de tant de personnes, qu'il est moralement impossible qu'elles eussent pu conspirer ensemble pour assûrer la même chose, si elle n'etoit vraie" (A. Arnauld and P. Nicole, *La logique ou l'Art de penser, contenant, outre les regles communes, plusieurs observations nouvelles, propres à former le jugement*, eds. P. Clair and F. Girbal (Paris, 1965), p. 336). A few pages later the distinction we have found in Heumann is suggested: "La première reflexion est qu'il faut mettre une extrême difference entre deux sortes de verités; les unes qui regardent seulement la nature des choses et leur essence immuable indépendamment de leur existance; et les autres qui regardent les choses existantes, et sur tous les évenemens humains et contingens, qui peuvent être et n'être pas quand il s'agit de l'avenir, et qui pouvoient n'avoir pas été quand il s'agit du passé. J'entens tout ceci selon leurs causes prochaines, en faisant abstraction de leur ordre immuable dans la providence de Dieu, parce que d'une part il n'empêche point la contingence, et que de l'autre ne nous étant pas connu il ne contribue rien à nous faire croire les choses" (p. 339).

that he can speak the truth, secondly that he wishes to" (I, p. 390). Hence, in order to establish how reliable the sources are, these two conditions need to be fulfilled (I, pp. 392–419). One can believe that a historian "wishes" to affirm the truth when he narrates events of his own lifetime, since he would be put to shame if he related them falsely, or when the facts related have no relation to the referent, or when he speaks badly of friends or well of enemies. An indispensable, though not wholly sufficient, condition for "being able" to speak the truth is contemporaneity (*coaevitas*); moreover, it is essential that the person who recounts a fact should have been an eye-witness or at least have learnt it from trustworthy people who have direct knowledge of it.

A correct historical method takes account of these pitfalls. First of all, the sources are always cited "with the actual words of the first referent, so that no doubts can be harboured as to the exact meaning of his words" (I, p. 410). Secondly, credit should be given to historical Pyrrhonism.[23] There are many uncertain facts in history; in the history of philosophy, moreover, there are not enough contemporary witnesses, so that the claim to construct a complete edifice of *historia philosophica* belongs not to *pia* but to *stulta desideria* (I, p. 413). It would be a great mistake to overcome the obstacle by forming an account based solely on hypotheses; the *silentium historicum* is better than an uncertain reconstruction of the facts: "omnes historici aut essent Taciti, aut taciti" (I, p. 418).

These are the general conditions of every historical method; the history of philosophy also presents some particular problems that Heumann categorizes according to whether they refer to the philosopher's life or to his teachings and writings. The *ars critica* is essential for the exact attribution and an authentic reading of the texts from which the philosophical system is taken.[24] The circumstances of the philosopher's life are submerged in uncertainty and myth, partly because of lack of information, partly because of biased reporting. The philosophers themselves contributed by giving misleading accounts of their own lives and their schools and opponents: the Stoics criticised the Epicureans, Aristotle undervalued all those who preceded him, the Church Fathers hated the Pagans, and worst of all, the Neoplatonists, competing with the Christians, "took the ungodly decision to invent for the 'Fathers' of their philosophical Church miracles as great [as those of the Christians] in order to raise the honour of their sect and to halt the growth of Christianity" (I, p. 440).

---

[23]The use of Pyrrhonism to refer to "non-verifiable" historical facts with secure documentation was shared by many authors of works on the art of history in Heumann's time: cf. B.G. Struve, *De vitiis historicorum* (Jena, 1705); P.F. Arpe, *Pyrrho sive de dubia et incerta historicorum fide* (Kiel, 1714); J.D. Koelerus, *De historia pragmatica* (Altdorf, 1714); L.A. Rechenberg, *De bono historico* (Leipzig, 1715); F.W. Bierling, *De pyrrhonismo historico* (Leipzig, 1724). See also: Momigliano, *The Controversy,* pp. 82–83.

[24]For the meaning of the term Heumann had in mind J. Le Clerc, *Ars critica seu de interpretatione veterum scriptorum*, 2 Vols. (Amsterdam, 1699), in which the following definition of *ars critica* is given: "We call 'criticism' the art of understanding the ancient writers, whether they wrote in prose or verse, and of judging which texts are genuine and which false". Heumann wrote, on the same subject, a *Commentatio de arte critica in usum academicum seorsim excusa* (Nürnberg and Altdorf, 1747).

The sources of the philosophers' teachings are conditioned by the same favourable or unfavourable attitude of the referent. Other possibilities for distortion are added to the situation: "first of all, many people, because of hatred and jealousy, have presented the principles of this or that philosopher falsely and absurdly [. . .]. Secondly, sometimes an opinion has been attributed to a philosopher that seems consistent with his principles as if he had really believed it, while in fact he had not [. . .]. Thirdly, an opinion has been attributed to a philosopher in ignorance because his philosophy has not been understood and it has not been possible to give a clear and correct account of his philosophical *dogmata*" (I, pp. 443–444). For the first point, the example of the Church Fathers such as Tertullian and Lactantius is applicable: they accused nearly all the Greek philosophers of atheism. For the second point we have the example of Anaxagoras, who was accused of saying that "snow is black" because he had insisted that the colour white arises from rarefaction and black from condensation, as snow is condensed water. Finally, a misunderstood philosophical principle has an example in Hobbes, judged by many as ungodly; if his teaching is referred not to natural law, but to the *principia* of politics, as its author wished, it retains all of its value (I, pp. 443–445).

Finally, Heumann presented in a schematic form the method that he intended to follow in his *historia philosophica* (I, pp. 453–462). He separated the part on the various teachings from that on the life of philosophers. When speaking of the figures of the philosophers, he set out to examine in the first place whether what was reported in the ancient sources was consistent with truth, in order to free history from legends. Anything that is unlikely or unbelievable (*unglaubische Geschichte*) cannot have happened. The historian cannot believe that Epimenides slept for fifty-seven years, that Pythagoras was the master of Numa Pompilius who in fact lived before him, that Plotinus performed miracles, or that certain philosophers had the gift of prophecy.

On the subject of teachings again, the preliminary task should be to check the exact attribution; secondly, the historian should try to reach a true understanding of each, which would mean examining the foundations and results. This was needed to make a value judgement that would be the basis for the historian's choice on a philosophical level: "As to the teachings whose attribution I am sure of, I wish in addition to examine their foundations and after that to judge whether to accept or reject them" (I, p. 457). Thus the main aim of *historia philosophica*, which is to teach how to philosophize, is realized. The historian's judgement, given in philosophical terms, that is to say based on its foundations (*Gründe*), is an integral part of the history of philosophy, which then ceases to be a historical science and becomes a philosophical discipline, in other words, a "philosophical history" and not simply a history of philosophy. Eclecticism had penetrated it completely to the point of transforming it.

6.2.10. The element which links the different aspects of historiographical theory and marks out the "Einleitung zur historia philosophica" for its importance and originality of approach, is the adoption of the philosophical viewpoint as a guide to the history of philosophy. The definition of philosophy given in the third chapter

does not simply have the purpose of determining the limits of *historia philosophica* and of establishing who were the real philosophers, but it becomes the criterion of historiographical judgement, since the characteristics of false and true philosophy, and the explanatory elements of its historical evolution, are inferred from it. The affirmation that philosophy was born in Greece and that Scholasticism represented the return of barbarism is not the result of a simple historical analysis but depends in the first place on the division of "acquired wisdom" into empirical and scientific, and on the recognition of the profound analogy of true religion with philosophy.

With Heumann, the history of philosophy takes possession of its object, namely, philosophy. According to L. Braun, this conquest represents a radical transformation in the genre. Heumann was, Braun believes, the founder of a *nouvelle histoire*, a new way of understanding the history of philosophy which was to be fully realized with Brucker's *Historia critica*: "Here the history of philosophy comes back to itself; it is set in place by means of its definition and becomes a concrete discipline and, in relation to its means, a relevant one. This taking possession of a specific object of study, this radical modification of practice, constitute a decisive turning point for philosophical historiography. This is why Heumann occupies a special place in this process"[25]. It is not only the theoretical premises, well discussed in Braun's book, which make Heumann an important staging-post on the road to Hegel and condition such a positive and radical judgement on the "Einleitung"; but credit is given to a conviction already present in Heumann, who claimed the merit of having been the first to reveal the history of philosophy as a philosophical discipline.

It might appear strange that Hegel's negative opinion of the philosophical historiography that preceded him, Brucker's in particular, should have many aspects in common with Heumann's idea that the historians of philosophy, up to his time, had fallen short of their task. Hornius, Vossius, and Stanley were, as we have seen, "more philologists than philosophers", and Heumann defined their work as *historia philosophiae* but not *historia philosophica*. A critical judgement of this sort appears as early as the Preface to the *Acta philosophorum* in a polemic with Stanley: "While not wishing by any means to take away praise from others whose work has deserved it, but willingly conceding to each his own, we must however confess that not even Stanley, although he constructed the greatest corpus of philosophical history, satisfies us fully, because he did not search with sufficient care either the truth of history or the circumstances and foundation of philosophical teachings. Instead, he presented us, so to speak, with a table laden with all kinds of dishes and left us free to

[25] Braun, p. 115. In a debate with Braun in which Heumann was made out to be an innovator in the field of philosophical historiography, Eugenio Garin defined the author of the *Acta philosophorum* as "an accurate though muddled forager rather than a gifted and original theorist", and added: "Doubt arises whether the debate on the very concept of the history of philosophy – or rather a radical change in the concept of philosophy and of the view of its past – did not in fact begin with the modest Heumann (that is, at the beginning of the 18th century), but germinated initially between the 15th and 16th centuries (with the discovery of the past, and not only the Greek and Latin past), and reached a clearer expression in the 17th and 18th centuries, to explode in the tense problematic between Kant (and Kantism) and Hegel (and Hegelism)" (Garin, "Questioni di storiografia filosofica", pp. 450–451.

taste whether something was sweet or bitter, cold or hot. Our purpose, on the other hand, is to place both the *principia historica* and the *principia philosophica* as the basis, and with the former to judge the *veritas factorum*, but with the latter to think rationally, while grasping the foundations of the teachings of so many philosophers (*nach denen letzen aber über die Meynungen so vieler* Philosophorum *gründlich raisonniren*)" (Heumann, I, "Vorbericht").

Heumann's point of view cannot be accepted acritically. Even if his tendency to disparage earlier historiography was less radical than Hegel's, yet his claim to have initiated *ex novo* a genre that had a long history behind it, and which Heumann was in fact very interested in, seems excessive. On the other hand, awareness of and desire for novelty were common in German philosophical historiography in the early eighteenth century, as we emphasized when speaking of Buddeus. The need for the historian of philosophy necessarily to pose the question of "judgement" in relation to the philosophical value of the various doctrines had been emerging at the same rate as interest in the history of philosophy of the eclectic tendency formed by Thomasius, Buddeus, and their followers. In order to guarantee the possibility of a justified and critical choice, the philosopher should pose the question judging the various systems based on "sound reason". Heumann agreed with this requirement, which was modifying the very concept of interpretation applied to philosophical historiography, integrating historical and philological with philosophical criteria: "Heumann's full treatment represents the crucial moment for philosophical historiography; the philologist, the historian, and the scholar are gradually being replaced by the philosopher in the study of the history of philosophy" (Malusa, "Sul ruolo del concetto di interpretazione", p. 128).

This justifies the assertion that only the philosopher can write the history of philosophy, an important assertion but one that needs to be defined better in order not to make Heumann a forerunner of historiographical attitudes in reality very far from his own position. The concept of philosophy he refers to is in fact eclecticism, which is not a particular school seeking reasons for its own superiority in history, nor is it a collection of ready-made opinions which need to be authenticated by history, but it is a method of research based on the independent and critical use of reason which constructs an *adaequatum systema* of explanation of reality with the aid of history. Historiographical practice had already adopted this attitude. Heumann made himself spokesman on a theoretical level for a transformation of the genre that had in fact already occurred. "The heights attained by critical philology in the recovery of Ancient texts, the rejection, now general, of an official Scholastic-type philosophy, the eclectic direction of philosophical culture, the presence in this culture of a new social class interested in making use of it for practical and political ends, and the change taking place in historiographical practice, all demanded a new definition of a genre that was, in fact, already transformed" (Del Torre, p. 66).

Heumann's merit was to have grasped clearly the new tasks of the history of philosophy and to have affirmed explicitly for the first time that it was philosophy, or rather eclectic philosophy, that gave it sense and direction. The expression "Historia philosophica philosophiae" attracted some favour: it was taken up again in the historiographical theory of the early nineteenth century and it was used by Kant himself,

who defined his own history of philosophy a priori "philosophische Geschichte der Philosophie".[26]

Heumann addressed a whole series of theoretical and methodological questions linked to the perspective of a "philosophical" history. Not only did he offer a definition of philosophy, but he also made an effort to make it historically relevant with examples of the characteristics of true and false philosophy. In the light of the same definition, he examined the question of the origin and development of philosophy, and described the historical, environmental, and psychological factors that made its progress possible. The questions raised by Heumann were to be absorbed into the German philosophical historiography of the eighteenth century, but they did not cause a true change of direction since they fitted perfectly into the perspective opened up by the historiographical production of Buddeus and his school. Brucker was later to refer, in the "Dissertatio praeliminaris" of his *Historia critica philosophiae*, to Heumann's "Einleitung", but at the same time he still continued the historiographical practice of the early eighteenth century.[27] The concept of eclectic philosophy was the common element linking them and defining the tasks and the method of the history of philosophy, theoretically in Heumann, and in historiographical practice in Buddeus, Gentzken, and Brucker.

The "Einleitung zur historia philosophica" is not complete in itself; its purpose was to clarify the theoretical premises in relation to the general work that Heumann intended to write: *Historia philosophiae philosophica, das ist, historische und critisirende Beschreibung der Philosophie, was solche vom Anfange der Welt biss auff gegenwärtige Zeit vor fata gehabt*, a "critical" history of philosophy from the beginning of the world up to the present. The work was planned but not carried out. Yet we can link it, even by the similarity of the title, with Brucker's work. This plan, announced in the Preface to the *Acta philosophorum*, aroused the interest of his contemporaries who recognized that Heumann had the gifts necessary for realizing it: "He possesses enough intelligence, erudition, diligence, and practical experience to undertake a work of this kind, and is free from any bias as the early parts of the work have already demonstrated" (Stolle, p. 424); Brucker would later repeat this opinion, adding the regret that other commitments had diverted Heumann from his purpose (Brucker, V, p. 38).

The *Acta philosophorum* carried out their original design only in part; they dealt with various problems haphazardly without claiming to be complete. The schema of division into periods given as an Appendix to the "Einleitung" remained a dead

[26]Cf. Geldsetzer, *Die Philosophie der Philosophiegeschichte*, pp. 130–131. Kant used the *Acta philosophorum* and *Conspectus Reipublicae litterariae* in his academic lectures, especially on the question of the origin of philosophy and on the periodization of Greek thought: cf. E. Feldmann, "Die Geschichte der Philosophie in Kants Vorlesungen", *Philosophisches Jahrbuch*, XLIX (1936), pp. 179–180, 185–186, and G. Micheli, *Kant storico della filosofia* (Padua, 1980), pp. 71–72, 153.

[27]On the links between Heumann and Brucker, cf. Braun, pp. 129–131; Freyer, pp. 21–49 (in particular pp. 33–34, where Freyer emphasises that Brucker, at Heumann's request, rejected the *collectanea* and took on the task of "judgement"); M. Longo, "Geistige Anregnungen und Quellen der Bruckerschen Historiographie", pp. 139–186.

letter. The originality claimed by the author in contrast with earlier historiography turns out to be somewhat limited considering the result obtained. The philosophical point of view claimed by Heumann exists as a statement in the "Einleitung", but is then lost because of the structure of the work, in a series of disorganized references. For example, his interest in Eastern philosophy is developed too extensively in contrast with the articles on Greek philosophy, when one reflects that for the author only the latter could be considered as true philosophy. If to this interest in the Eastern people, common among historians of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, we add the prevalence of articles on biographical and bibliographical topics, it will be easy to place Heumann's work, despite his intentions, with the polyhistorical and erudite tradition of the previous century. His own literary training led him in this direction, as Freyer suggests: "in the universality of his understanding and in the meaning of his work he belongs wholly to polyhistory" (Freyer, p. 20). In effect, his work on literary history (the *Conspectus Reipublicae litterariae*) was appreciated and spoken of throughout the eighteenth century.

Heumann's influence on subsequent historiography cannot be limited, as the author himself appears to wish, to having assigned the new task of judgement to the historian of philosophy. He was also to cause greater consideration to be given to historico-critical, philological, and hermeneutic problems, that was to become a dominant characteristic of German philosophical historiography in the eighteenth century. Attention to detail, the detection of historical errors, and the criticism of sources, were aided by the very form of the work, since the journal enabled the author to proceed one point at a time, proposing and resolving the various questions without worrying about losing sight of the unitary thread and the task of providing a fuller historical reconstruction: "His *Acta philosophorum* signals the beginning of a very important attempt to treat individual historical problems and, above all, questions of hermeneutics and the criticism of sources, in the form of a journal; in this way, general histories of philosophy are relieved of discursive discussions of details and freed to proceed with the higher task of historical construction" (Freyer, p. 20). Heumann's attempt was to be put forward again at the end of the century, at the time of Kant, by Fülleborn with his *Beiträge für Geschichte der Philosophie* (1791–1799) and extended during the nineteenth century and up to our present day with the creation of numerous journals specializing in the history of philosophy.

6.2.11. On Heumann's life and works: Stolle, pp. 848–889; Schmersahl, pp. 37–38; G. A. Cassius, *Ausführliche Lebensbeschreibung des um die gelehrte Welt Hochverdienten D. Christoph August Heumann*s (Kassel, 1768), with the complete list of his writings (pp. 251–439); Jöcher, (Erg), II, coll. 1977–1979; Heinsius, II, col. 361; Gumposch, p. 233; BUAM, XX, pp. 332–333; ADB, XII, pp. 327–330; NDB, IX, p. 43.

On Heumann's teaching activity and his literary output: Paulsen, *Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts*, Vol. I, p. 514; Wundt, p. 290; Kirchner, *Das deutsche Zeitschriftenwesen*, Vol. I, p. 91; Petersen, *Geschichte der aristotelischen Philosophie*, p. 420; I. Mager, "Die theologische Lehrfreiheit in Göttingen unf ihre Grenzen. Der Abendmahlskonflikt um Christoph August Heumann", in

Theologie in Göttingen. Eine Vorlesungsreihe, ed. B. Möller (Göttingen, 1987), pp. 41–57; G. Mühlpfordt, "Ein kryptoradikaler Thomasianer: C.A. Heumann, der Thomasius von Göttingen", in *Christian Thomasius*, ed. Schneiders, pp. 305–334; S. Lehmann-Brauns, *Kritische Gelehrsamkeit und mystische Gelehrsamkeitskritik. C.A. Heumann und G. Arnold im Spannungsfeld von "Knowledge and Belief"* (Berlin, 2004).

On the reception of the "Einleitung zur historia philosophica": Stolle, p. 424; Struve, I, p. 162; Jonsius, II, p. 217; Brucker, I, p. 38; Elswich, *De varia Aristotelis fortuna*, p. 97; S.F. Weitzmann, *Dissertatio philosophica de ingenio ad philosophandum nato*, Jena 1721; Fr. Chr. Baumeister, *Triga Germanorum de historia philosophica in nostris temporibus meritorum* (Görlitz, 1740) (on Heumann, Stolle, Brucker); Buddeus, *Isagoge ad theologiam*, Vol. I, p. 196.

The *Acta philosophorum* were reviewed by Heumann himself in AE, 1716, pp. 463–471; AE, Suppl. VII, pp. 473–480; AE, 1727, pp. 519–522; NL, II (1716), pp. 275–276; NL, VII (1718), p. 262.

On the concept of the history of philosophy in Heumann: Freyer, pp. 20–21; Feldmann, "Die Geschichte der Philosophie in Kants Vorlesungen", pp. 179–180 and 185–186; Geldsetzer, *Die philosophie der Philosophiegeschichte*, pp. 16 and 130–131; W.E. Ehrardt, *Philosophiegeschichte und geschichtlicher Skeptizismus. Untersuchung zur Frage: wie ist Philosophiegeschichte möglich*? (Bern and Munich, 1967), pp. 42–43; Braun, pp. 100–119; H. Blumenberg, *Der Prozess der theoretischen Neugierde* (Frankfurt a.M., 1973), pp. 184ff and 210ff; E. Garin, "Questioni di storiografia filosofica", *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia*, XXIX (1974), pp. 442–448; Malusa, "Sul ruolo del concetto di interpretazione", pp. 128–132; Del Torre, pp. 65–68; M. Longo, "Per una storia 'filosofica' della filosofia (Ch. A. Heumann)", in *Saggi di epistemologia e di storiografia*, ed. C. Giacon (Padua, 1979), pp. 129–164; Id., *Historia philosophiae philosophica*, pp. 76–90; S. Ricci, "Bruno spinozista, Bruno martire luterano: la polemica fra Lacroze e Heumann", GCFI, LXV (1986), pp. 43–61; W. Sparn, "Philosophische Historie und dogmatische Heterodoxie. Der Fall des Exegeten Christoph August Heumann", in *Historische Kritik und biblischer Kanon in der deutschen Aufklärung*, ed. H.G. Reventlow et al. (Wiesbaden, 1988), pp. 171–192; F.M. Wimmer, *Interkulturelle Philosophie. Geschichte und Theorie*, Vol. 1 (Vienna, 1990), pp. 209–222; U.J. Schneider, *Die Vergangenheit des Geistes*, pp. 23–26; Piaia, "European Identity and National Characteristics in the *Historia philosophica*", pp. 599–600; Zedelmaier, *Der Anfang der Geschichte*, pp. 96–131; Kelley, "Intellectual History in a Global Age", p. 158; Israel, *Philosophy, History of Philosophy, and* l'Histoire de l'esprit humain, pp. 330–338; S. Lehmann-Brauns, *Weisheit in der Weltgeschichte*, pp. 355–396; Catana, *The Historiographical Concept "System of Philosophy"*, pp. 150–152, 159–165, 172–177, 185–191; Varani, *Pensiero "alato" e modernità*, pp. 228–240.

Chapter 7
Text Books on the History of Philosophy from Heumann to Brucker

Mario Longo

Introduction

From a historiographical point of view, the period from 1720 to 1750 is characterized by the writings of Brucker, whose works start with the *Historia philosophica doctrinae de ideis* (1723), followed by such large-scale works as the *Kurtze Fragen aus der philosophischen Historie* (1731–1736, 9 Vols.) and the *Historia critica philosophiae* (1742–1744, 5 Vols.). In parallel to these truly impressive books various textbooks of philosophy appeared, compiled with more modest intentions; in these, historiographical research gave up any claim to erudition and adapted itself to didactic requirements, to serve as a means of orientation and study for students attending university courses in philosophy.

What we have here is "minor" historiographical literature, but it is not without interest. The textbooks of the history of philosophy, read and studied by generations of students, were vehicles for the popularization of ideas that gradually penetrated and shaped the historical culture of the period; in a simple and informal way they explained the long and patient process of research into sources and the critical reading of texts. As there was no learned element, more attention was paid to the framework, and the division into periods was made more precise; by now the three-part division of philosophical thought into ancient, medieval and modern had been definitively established. These scholastic texts would continue to be used for more than half a century; they would constitute the basis of Kant's philosophical training and would provide the programme for his lectures on the history of philosophy serving as an introduction to courses on metaphysics and logic. The success of Brucker's *Historia critica* can also be explained by the interest in the history of philosophy created by the spread of this discipline in the universities.

The production of textbooks revived an attitude which had surfaced in the previous period, whereby, in order to be studied properly, philosophy, as *philosophia*

M. Longo (✉)
Università di Verona, Dipartimento di Filosofia, Pedagogia e Psicologia, Lungadige Porta Vittoria 17, 37132 Verona, Italy
e-mail: mario.longo@univr.it

G. Piaia, G. Santinello (eds.), *Models of the History of Philosophy*, International Archives of the History of Ideas, Archives internationales d'histoire des idées,
DOI 10.1007/978-90-481-9507-7_7, © Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2011

eclectica, required an adequate historical introduction. The history of philosophy thus found a place in academic courses of philosophy to integrate instrumental philosophy, following Buddeus' approach to the teaching of logic.

A significant example is the structure of the *Systema philosophiae* by Friedrich Gentzken, the author of the most famous and most complete textbook on the history of philosophy. Here philosophy is divided into "instrumental" and "principal" and the latter into "theoretical" and "practical". Instrumental philosophy contained three disciplines: the history of philosophy, metaphysics, and logic: "(1) *Historia philosophica*, which gives an account of the growth and decline of wisdom, and of those who first studied it and those who spread and restored it; (2) *Metaphysica*, which is the doctrine of universal notions in that they show the very general ideas of things and the fundamental truths flowing from them; (3) *Logica*, which teaches the way to reason correctly, so that true can be distinguished from false and probable from improbable" (F. Gentzken, "Dissertatio prooemialis de natura et indole philosophiae in genere", in Id., *Systema philosophiae*, Hamburg, 1725, pp. 9–10). Logic is not enough for philosophical research, which also requires an acquaintance with the technical terms of philosophical discourse, offered by metaphysics, and sufficient information on the history of philosophy, which helps us to understand the path taken up to this point in the study of truth.

The need for suitable textbooks on the history of philosophy was noted particularly in the third decade of the eighteenth century; in 1724 and 1725 the summaries by Gentzken and Reinhard appeared, in 1727 that by Heineccius and in 1730 that by Lamezan. After Brucker's two textbooks, taken from his larger works (*Auszug aus den Kurtzen Fragen*, Ulm, 1736; *Institutiones historiae philosophicae*, Leipzig, 1747), which will be considered in the next chapter, came Lodtmann's *Kurzer Abriss der Geschichte der Weltweisheit* (1754), which differed from previous textbooks in that it showed the influence of Brucker and the climate of Wolffianism that moulded German philosophical culture in the 1750s.

Gentzken, Reinhard, and Heineccius considered themselves disciples of Ch. Thomasius and Buddeus; therefore the eclectic approach to philosophizing predominated in their work, followed by a lively anti-sectarian and anti-dogmatic polemic. Criticism of Aristotle and Scholasticism was accompanied by the exaltation of "reform", both literary and religious, which for them signalled the beginning of modern thought, understood in its best aspect as eclecticism: "When in fifteenth and sixteenth centuries barbarism had been driven away by the work of Joh. Reuchlin, Ulrich von Hutten, Erasmus of Rotterdam, Rudolph Agricola, Lorenzo Valla and others, and the Papal yoke had been shaken off through the work of Martin Luther, philosophy took on a new appearance" (L. Reinhard, *Compendium historiae philosophicae*, Leipzig, 1725, pp. 140–141). Lamezan's textbook is a case apart, which shows little sympathy for modern thought, apparently preferring ancient and scholastic philosophy.

One of the aspects that characterized the philosophical culture of the period and that is consequently reflected in the history of philosophy, is the spread of Wolffian philosophy. This was particularly marked in the German university world of the second and third decades of the eighteenth century. As a philosopher of "enlightened"

moderation, Wolff enjoyed a European reputation, "he almost completely dominated the field of philosophy in the Orthodox and Catholic areas of East and Central Europe until the coming of Kant" (Valjavec, *Geschichte der abendländischen Aufklärung*, p. 143). Wolff himself was interested in the history of philosophy in a theoretical sense, making some observations on the significance of philosophical historiography in general, and also in a practical sense, with his famous *Oratio de Sinarum philosophia* (1726).

In Wolff's system, history is assimilated into empirical knowledge (*cognitio historica*); it is bare knowledge of fact (*nuda facti notitia*) contrasted with philosophy (*cognitio philosophica)*, which is knowledge of the foundation (*ratio*) of fact. Although historical knowledge is the basis (*fundamentum*) of philosophical knowledge, philosophical knowledge is superior to it because it leads to a knowledge of the causes of phenomena, i.e. "why they are or become" (Ch. Wolff, "Discursus praeliminaris de philosophia in genere", in Id., *Philosophia rationalis sive Logica, methodo scientifica pertractata et ad usum scientiarum atque vitae aptata*, Verone, 1735). Thus he who only possesses a historical knowledge of philosophy cannot call himself a philosopher (*Logica*, § 49), since this knowledge at most serves for the practice of living (*ad usum vitae*) and as a preparatory course for real knowledge of philosophy: "It is certainly useful to acquire a historical knowledge of philosophy before applying oneself to philosophy itself. In fact, in demonstrations, preceding notions are assumed to be familiar; therefore, he who has familiarized himself with the premises before evaluating the demonstrations understands everything more easily and proceeds more quickly in his study of philosophy than the person who is more or less ignorant of what has been passed down to us" (*Logica*, § 51). The history of philosophy, like the other historical disciplines, acts as an introduction and clarifies terms (*Logica*, § 789). Compared with the philosophy of a Thomasius or Buddeus, that is, of the eclectic tendency, in Wolff the history of philosophy has a narrower meaning, one that makes certain notions and demonstrative procedures familiar but does not involve true philosophical research.[1]

Wolff also wrote a brief essay on the history of philosophy: *Oratio de Sinarum philosophia practica, in solemni panegyri recitata, cum in ipso Academiae Halensis natali XXVIII die XII Julii A.O.P. 1721 fasces prorectorales successori traderet, notis uberioribus illustrata* (Frankfurt, 1726). The *Oratio* had led to disputes with the Pietists and was the reason for his expulsion from the University of Halle. Wolff knew Chinese philosophy through the Jesuits' translation of classical Chinese works: *Confucius Sinarum philosophus, sive Scientia Sinensis latine exposita* (Paris,

[1]The difference in method between Wolff and the followers of Thomasius is pointed out by Zambelli, *La formazione filosofica*, p. 414; she cites a passage from the Preface to the *Logica* which shows clearly the polemic against eclecticism because of its lack of methodological rigour: "However, the freedom to philosophize introduced a superficial philosophy into the schools". Merker concluded that Wolff's German writings were not far from Thomasius's programme, in their common aspiration for a philosophy orientated toward practice; cf. Merker, *L'illuminismo tedesco*, p. 134.

1688), and more recently, *Sinensis imperii libri classici VI* (Prague, 1711), edited by the Jesuit François Noel.[2]

Wolff's enthusiasm for Chinese ethics originated in the possibility of finding in these pagan people the essential principles of his own teaching on morality. It was thus possible to construct a natural and rational morality leaving out the principles of theology, "with the powers of nature alone". It is worth emphasizing the methodological principle implicit in his declaration that he had understood the moral teaching of the Chinese by starting from an ethical system that he had already discovered himself: "Although I did not make use of the teachings of the Chinese, which in fact I did not know, to find my own teachings, yet these teachings which I found through the efforts of my own intelligence alone were useful to me in understanding Chinese teachings more fully" (*Oratio*, p. 78). This fits in with what Wolff had stated in his *Logic* (§ 51), that the philosopher alone is the natural judge in philosophical controversies. However, the *Oratio* on the Chinese was not greatly appreciated as a historical work: its author was judged to be "a brilliant and very shrewd man but less knowledgeable and prepared in philosophical history than in philosophy and mathematics" (Brucker, VI, p. 979).

What contributed to the establishing of a different direction in historical research was less Wolff's ideas on the history of philosophy or his activity in this field and more his concept of philosophy as "knowledge of possible beings as far as they can be" (*scientia possibilium, quatenus esse possunt*), aimed at grounding every aspect of the real. This concept is connected to the idea of "system" and the importance of the rigorous methodological foundation of all the philosophical disciplines, the reappraisal of metaphysics and the problems of ontology, and at the same time attention to the modern science of mathematical physics. In the chapter on Brucker it will be possible to observe the influence of this philosophical approach on the structure and, above all, the historiographical interpretation of the *Historia critica philosophiae*. Among the works examined in this chapter, the influence of Wolffian philosophy is evident in Lodtmann's *Kurzer Abriss*, shown in the ample space devoted to the Chinese, in the interest in the mathematical approach to philosophical questions, and the attention to scientific progress; we can also observe the absence of traditional accusations of Spinozism and atheism made against ancient philosophy.

The spread of Wolffism is reflected in historiography in another way, in the creation of a historical interest in Wolff's philosophy itself, soon defined by his opponents and his followers as "Leibnizio-Wolffian". The long disputes with the Pietists and the philosophers of the Halle circle (Francke, Lange, Buddeus) persuaded Wolff to defend himself with an account of his own writings and philosophy:

[2]There was widespread interest in the Chinese in Europe, thanks mainly to the Jesuits, who had opened a number of missions in China in the seventeenth century. The literature on the subject that appeared between the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century is truly impressive. Leibniz himself was interested in the Chinese (*Novissima Sinica historia*, 1687); Heumann translated into German the work of Eusèbe Renaudot, "Anciennes relations des Indes et de la Chine", in Heumann, II, pp. 717–786. The moral philosophy of the Chinese was particularly appreciated; cf G.B. Bilfinger, *Specimen doctrinae veterum Sinarum moralis et politica* (Frankfurt, 1724). There is a full survey of writings on the Chinese of this period in Struve, I, pp. 170–176.

Ausführliche Nachricht von seinen eigenen Schrifften, die er in deutscher Sprache heraus gegeben (Frankfurt a.M, 1726; facs. repr. in Ch. Wolff, *Gesammelte Werke*, 1. *Deutsche Schriften*, Hildesheim-New York, 1973, with an "Einleitung" by H.W. Arndt). In response to Buddeus's interpretation of his work, which accused him of "Spinozism", Wolff reviewed the contested parts of his teaching, to demonstrate that it was not against the faith, but rather "opened the way to Christianity" (*Ausführliche Nachricht*, pp. 568–569).

Carl Günther Ludovici (1707–1778) put together a large collection of material on the history of Wolffism: *Ausführlicher Entwurf einer vollständingen Historie der Wolffischen Philosophie* (Leipzig, 1735); *Sammlung und Auszüge der sämmtlichen Streitschriften wegen der Wolffischen Philosophie* (Leipzig, 1737); *Entwurf einer vollständigen Historie der Leibnizischen Philosophie* (Leipzig, 1737); *Neueste Merkwürdigkeiten der Leibnitz-Wolffischen Weltweisheit gesammelt und mit unpartheyischen Feder aufgesetz* (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1738). These works were all reprinted in Ch. Wolff, *Gesammelte Werke*, III, *Ergänzungsreihe: Materialien und Dokumente* (Hildesheim-New York, 1973–1977).

The first systematic book on Wolffism was the work of a doctor from Erfurt, Georg Volckmar Hartmann, *Einleitung zur Historie der Leibnitzsch-Wolffischen Philosophie* (Frankfurt and Leipzig, 1737; repr. in Wolff, *Gesammelte Werke* III, *Materialien und Dokumente*, with "Préface" by J. Ecole). In the first part Hartmann traced the lives of the authors most cited in the writings of Wolff (Aristotle, Averroës, Descartes, Bayle, Leibniz, Wolff, Lange, and Buddeus) and gave a historical panorama of the relationship between reason and faith, and soul and body. The second part is devoted entirely to Wolffian philosophy: the first section describes the sources, discoveries, and methods, and the second the history of the disputes and arguments with the Pietists.

In this period, polyhistorical and bibliographical production was the object of an intense effort of modernization. There were three editions of Morhof's *Polyhistor* in the first half of the eighteenth century, edited by J. Mollerus (Lübeck, 1714), J. Frickius, and again J. Mollerus, with a preface by J.A. Fabricius describing the periodicals produced in Europe (Lübeck, 1732), continued by J.J. Schwabe up to 1747 (Lübeck, 1747). Struve's *Bibliotheca philosophica* was also very successful: the first edition was published in 1704, *recensuit et accessionibus instruxit* J.G. Lotterus (Jena, 1728), and finally *emendata ultra dimidiam partem continuata* by L.M. Kahlius, 2 Vols. (Göttingen, 1740). Important bibliographical reference books appeared, such as C.G. Jöcher's famous *Allgemeines Gelehrten Lexicon, darinne die Gelehrten aller Stände sowohl männ-als weiblichen Geschlechts, welche vom Anfange der Welt bis auf ietzige Zeit gelebt und sich der gelehrten Welt bekannt gemacht*, 2 Vols. (Leipzig, 1750–1751), brought up to the end of the eighteenth century and published in 6 Vols. by J.C. Adelung (Leipzig, 1784–1819), and again to the end of the nineteenth century by H.W. Rotermund (7 Vols., Leipzig, 1897). Jöcher wrote several dissertations on topics related to the history of philosophy: *Analecta de philosophorum, potissimum veterum, peculiaribus studendi modis* (Leipzig, 1716); *De insigni veterum quorundam philosophorum fervore in veritate investiganda* (Leipzig, 1730); *Philosophiae Haeresium obex* (Leipzig, 1732).

Other much appreciated works in this field were those by Elias Fr. Schmersahl (1719–1775), a pupil of Walch's at Leipzig: *Zuverlässige Nachrichten von jüngst verstorbenen Gelehrten*, 2 Vols. (Leipzig, 1754–1756). It is worth mentioning another work by Schmersahl, which although still belonged to the polyhistorical sphere for its method, still showed strong analogies with the works on the history of philosophy: *Historie der Weltweisheit überhaupt. Nebst einen Vorbericht von den bisherigen Verfassern dieser Historie* (Zelle, 1744). As can be imagined from the title, the first part consists of an account of the writers on the history of philosophy whose life and works are described. The book is not a true history of philosophy but a dictionary, which instead of being arranged in alphabetical order uses a framework based on a division typical of philosophical historiography: it is divided into three chapters: 1. "Von der Weltweisheit der ersten Einwohner des Erdbodens, der Hebräer und Juden" (pp. 39–66); 2. "Von der Weltweisheit der Heiden" (pp. 67–166); 3. "Von der Weltweisheit der Christen" (pp. 166–247). The author records the life and works of the philosophers and, where it exists, a modern bibliography for each.

It is only possible here to give a short mention to the numerous dissertations on the history of philosophy which appeared in the first half of the eighteenth century. Some of them were collected by Christian Ernst von Windheim (1722–1766) in his *Fragmenta historiae philosophicae, seu commentarii philosophorum vitas et dogmata illustrantes, olim seorsim editi, nunc coniunctim recusi* (Erlangen, 1753). For his part, Windheim published *Examen argumentorum Platonis pro immortalitate animae humanae* (Göttingen, 1749); *Die Bemühungen der Weltweisen vom Jahre 1700–1750*, 6 Vols. (Nürnberg, 1751–1754), and he was the editor of the journal *Gottingische philosophische Bibliothek* (Hanover, 1749–1757), in nine volumes.

Let us conclude this survey of the historiographical literature of the period by mentioning a planned history of philosophy that remained incomplete: the *Historia philosophiae. Pars prima* (Jena, 1742). Its author was Joh. Ernst Schubert (1717–1774), at that time a private teacher of philosophy in Jena, and of Wolffian sympathies. In his definition of the history of philosophy, he emphasized the objectivity of the historical task: "it is a survey of opinions on philosophical matters that various men have embraced at any time", which is why it rejects all value judgements ("it should contain neither approval nor criticism of the philosophical opinions") and recommends extracting teachings directly from the texts (p. 15). In reality, the historical reconstruction in this first volume, devoted to barbarian philosophy, is wholly "hypothetical" (Brucker, VI, p. 31), and accepts all kinds of indirect evidence with little critical spirit. Heumann's reservations (which Brucker had to a great extent upheld) on the positive nature of barbarian and oriental philosophy were totally dismissed by Schubert, who in fact repeated the notion, typical of seventeetnth-century storiography, that oriental philosophy was the source of Greek philosophy. We can see this, for example, in the opinion he expresses on the Chaldean oracles: "These oracles certainly contain many things that are difficult to understand, yet we can gather from them the main teaching of the Chaldean sages, particularly because Plato in his philosophy explained the sense more clearly and it seems to me to be almost entirely deduced from those oracles" (*Historia*

philosophiae. Pars prima, p. 23). Schubert's plan was quite extensive and ambitious, as is shown by the fact that the entire first volume was dedicated to pre-Greek philosophy and the "geometrical" method, made up of definitions and of scholia which were applied to it. But after obtaining the chair of Theology at Helmstedt, Schubert no longer had time to complete the work he had undertaken. The lack of any comparison with Greek and modern philosophy prevents us from making a proper appraisal of the value of this work, which, if it had been completed, might perhaps have represented, with the breadth of its treatment and the range of its aim, a possible alternative to Brucker's *Historia critica*.

Bibliographical Note

For general works on the German Enlightenment, cf. the bibliographical note to Chapter 5.

An anastatic copy of the writings of Wolff has been under preparation since 1962: Ch. Wolff, *Gesammelte Werke*, eds. J. École, H.W. Arndt, J.E. Hofmann, M. Thomann, C.A. Corr (Hildesheim-New York: G. Olms): I. *Gesammelte deutsche Schriften*, II. *Gesammelte lateinische Schriften*, III. *Ergänzungsreihe: Materialien und Dokumente*. The introductions and editors' notes form an important critical contribution on the various aspects of Wolff's thought.

Essential bibliography on Wolff: H. Pichler, *Ueber Christian Wolffs Ontologie* (Leipzig, 1910); H. Lüthje, "Christian Wolffs Philosophiebegriff", *Kantstudien*, XXX (1925), pp. 39–66; J.H. De Vleeschauwer, "La genèse de la méthode mathématique de Wolff", *Revue Belge de philologie et d'histoire*, XI (1932), pp. 651–677; M. Campo, *Cristiano Wolff e il razionalismo precritico*, 2 Vols. (Milan, 1939); H. Heimsoeth, *Christian Wolffs Ontologie und die Prinzipienforschung I. Kants* (Köln, 1956); J.V. Burns, *Dynamism in the Cosmology of Christian Wolff. A Study in Pre-critical Rationalism* (New York, 1966); A. Bissinger, *Die Struktur der Gotteserkenntnis. Studien zur Philosophie Ch. Wolffs,* (Bonn, 1970); *Christian Wolff als Philosoph der Aufklärung in Deutschland*, ed. H.-M. Gerlach et al. (Halle, 1980); F.L. Marcolungo, *Wolff e il possibile* (Padua, 1982); *Christian Wolff (1679–1754). Interpretationen zu seiner Philosophie und deren Wirkung* (Hamburg, 1983, 1986^2); J. École, *La métaphysique de C. Wolff*, 2 Vols. (Hildesheim-Zürich-New York, 1990); Id., *Nouvelles études et nouveaux documents photographiques sur Wolff* (Hildesheim-Zürich-New York, 1997); *Christian Wolff and Law and Economics*, ed. J.G. Backhaus (Hildesheim-Zürich-New York, 1998); *La filosofia pratica tra metafisica e antropologia dell'età di Wolff e Vico*, ed. G. Cacciatore (Naples, 1999); L. Cataldi Madonna, *Christian Wolff und das System des klassischen Rationalismus* (Hildesheim-Zürich-New York, 2001); J.I. Gómez Tutor*, Die wissenschaftliche Methode bei Christian Wolff* (Hildesheim-Zürich-New York, 2004); P. Pimpinella, *Wolff e Baumgarten. Studi di terminologia filosofica* (Florence, 2005); *Christian Wolff tra psicologia empirica e psicologia razionale*, ed. F.L. Marcolungo (Hildesheim-Zürich-New York, 2007); *Christian*

Wolff und die europäische Aufklärung, eds. J. Stolzenberg and O.-P. Rudolph (Hildesheim-Zürich-New York, 2007).

On the *Oratio de Sinarum philosophia practica*: M. Campo, *Cristiano Wolff e il razionalismo precritico*, Vol. II, pp. 516–546; D.F. Lach, "The Sinophilism of Christian Wolff (1679–1754)", *Journal of the history of Ideas*, XIV (1953), pp. 561–574; A. Zempliner, "Die Chinesische Philosophie und J. Ch. Wolff", *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie*, X (1962), pp. 758–778; M. Albrecht, "Einleitung", in *Oratio de Sinarum philosophia practica. Rede über die praktischen Philosophie der Chinesen*, ed. M. Albrecht (Hamburg, 1985), pp. ix–lxxxviii.

There is no real bibliography of textbooks on the history of philosophy published in the first half of the seventeenth century; see the list in Braun pp. 376–379. On Kant's use of textbooks in his academic lectures: E. Feldmann, "Die Geschichte der Philosophie in Kants Vorlesungen", *Philosophisches Jahrbuch*, XLIX (1936), pp. 167–198; G. Micheli, *Kant storico della filosofia* (Padua, 1980), pp. 63–69, 147.

7.1 Friedrich Gentzken (1679–1757)

Historia philosophiae

7.1.1. Gentzken belonged to the first generation of the German Enlightenment, which recognised Ch.Thomasius as its leader and looked to Halle as its centre of inspiration. He was born in Usedom in Pomerania in 1679; he studied firstly at the University of Greifswald and then at Kiel, and the rest of his life was given to teaching at the faculty of Philosophy at Kiel, where he became temporary professor in 1708 and permanent professor of Physics and Politics in 1721, and first professor of Philosophy and Logic in 1725; from 1739 he held also the chair of Morals. His fame is linked to the publication of the *Systema philosophiae*, composed on the model of Buddeus' *Elementa philosophiae* and divided into twelve treatises, which formed an alternative to Wolff's works for the whole of the first half of the century. He died on 27th March, 1757.

7.1.2. Gentzken's early writings were concerned with "practical philosophy": *Disputatio ad Christ. Thomasium de quaestione: an leges naturales sint stricte et proprie dictae leges?* (Greifswald, 1704); *Dissertatio historico-moralis de principiis honesti* (Kiel, 1707); *Schediasma morale de principiis justi*; *De natura et proprietatibus animi humani* (Kiel, 1710). The most important work of this early period was a compendium of moral philosophy, in which the influence of Thomasius is evident, as too is the use of German: *Kurze Einleitung glückselig zu leben, worinnen die Regeln der Frömmigkeit, Sittigkeit, Gerechtigkeit, Klugheit und Manierlichkeit, in soweit sie aus der Vernunfft erkant werden, zum Unterricht der Jugend aufs deutlichste vorgestellet werden* (Kiel, 1708, 1718^2).

The theme of moral philosophy was subsequently developed and produced in Latin, parallel to the other branches of philosophy, in a systematic work that first appeared in Kiel and Hamburg between 1722 and 1727 and was republished in 1735–1736: *Systema philosophiae in quo, praemissa generatim de sapientia,*

prudentia et virtute dissertatione, omnes sub philosophiae ambitu comprehensae doctrinae justa methodo succincte exponuntur, atque ex solidis fundamentis demonstrantur. In total, it consists of twelve books arranged according to the three parts into which philosophy was divided: "instrumental", "theoretical", and "practical". It follows Buddeus's framework, as is clearly seen in the four sections into which instrumental philosophy is divided: 1. *Dissertatio prooemialis de natura et indole philosophiae in genere*; 2. *Historia philosophiae aevi veteris, medii et recentioris*; 3. *Metaphysica sive doctrina universalium*; 4. *Logica sive scientia ratiocinandi*. It should be noted that metaphysics is placed among the instrumental disciplines, since it is "the knowledge of terminology" according to the nominalist point of view shared in Germany by the followers of Thomasius, and that the history of philosophy is included among the indispensable tools of the philosopher. Gentzken's history of philosophy was published for the first time in 1724: *Historia philosophiae, in qua philosophorum celebrium vitae eorumque hypotheses notabiliores, ac sectarum fata a longa memoria ad nostra usque tempora succincte et ordine sistuntur. In usum lectionum academicarum* (Hamburg: apud T.C. Felginer, 1724); the second edition, with the addition of a paragraph on Leibniz, appeared in 1725, and in 1731 the third, "subiectis in fine animadversionibus".

There is frequent reference to the history of philosophy in all parts of the *Systema*, but it is evident especially in the "Prolegomena" to various essays in which from time to time the author defines the subject he is about to address. The summaries of the history of logic are worth mentioning ("Prolegomena de definitione et divisione Logicae in Ratiocinandi scientia, quam Logicam vulgo nominant. In qua ea, quae ad ratiocinandi regulas, et veritatis ac probabilitatis naturam indolemque recte intelligendam pertinent, justo ordine succincte traduntur", Hamburg, 1725), as are those of the history of natural law ("Prolegomena in quibus historia huius disciplinae traditur in Philosophiae moralis pars prima exhibens iuris divini naturalis prudentiam in qua praemissis generalioribus praecognitis praecepta iusti e fundamentali propositione deducuntur, nexuque perpetuo succincte sistuntur", Hamburg, 1727). Gentzken added a number of dissertations on individual subjects as an appendix to the various parts. At the end of the logic section he presented a "Programma exhibens usum doctrinae de probabilitate" on the four areas in which this theory can be applied: physics, history, morals, and hermeneutics; and in the appendix to the section on politics there is a "Dissertatio de matrimonio clandestino Gallis dicto *le Mariage de Conscience*".

7.1.3. In defining the history of philosophy, Gentzken refers back to the concept of philosophy he had outlined in his "Dissertatio prooemialis de natura et indole in genere", placed at the beginning of *Systema*: "it is the exercise of reason with which we can have a happy life for ourselves, through thinking and acting correctly" (*Systema philosophiae*, Hamburg, 1725, p. 1). This statement throws light on the two qualifying aspects of philosophy: it is a rational exercise and as such it makes use of proof and correct reasoning; and it is erudite wisdom (*solide docta*). Yet at the same time it offers direction and encouragement to the actions of man: it is not only wisdom, knowledge of the true and the good, but is also a practical science (*prudentia*) and virtue.

These conceptual definitions condition the theoretical foundation of the *Systema philosophiae*, but they are not rigorously applied on the historiographical level. Although Gentzken had affirmed, following in Heuman's footsteps, that the wisdom of the Patriarchs was not strictly speaking philosophy ("It is an empirical and popular wisdom only, not scientific and learned": *Historia philosophiae*, p. 4), he does not pose the question of the philosophical legitimacy of the wisdom of the Oriental peoples, which in fact he treated at great length. Aware that during the course of history, philosophy had been practised in profoundly different and often contradictory ways, Gentzken approached the subject with historical rather than theoretical criteria in order to grasp the variety of philosophical attitudes expressed in the past, without excluding any arbitrarily: "It was subject to many changes and did not maintain the form that its students gave it unaltered, but as the centuries passed it acquired various forms according to the way of thinking of the masters who taught it, and seemed at times healthy, at other times wretched, now flourishing and now neglected". It is the task of the historian of philosophy to expound "the destiny of philosophy from the earliest times up to our own times" (*Historia philosophiae*, p. 1).

The connection between philosophy and the history of philosophy that Gentzken intended to achieve on a didactic level by producing a course that would prepare students for their studies in philosophy, had some theoretical justification, inasmuch as the highest form of philosophy is the eclectic, "which, having rejected the principle of authority and antiquity, chooses from the various writers what it judges to be solid, proven, and consistent with its principle. On the other hand, we reject that sectarian philosophy which accepts the principles of others without examining them and reckons that it should follow their authorities not as guides but as masters" ("De natura et indole philosophiae", p. 9).

Thomasius had made use of the history of philosophy to justify the freedom of philosophical research, maintaining that every philosophical system was inevitably partial; Gentzken stressed more the positive aspect of historical knowledge for its capacity to encourage a wider and more critical understanding of philosophical questions. In this way, the history of philosophy becomes a tool for understanding philosophy ("the other eye of philosophical wisdom": *Historia philosophiae*, "Lectori benevolo"), while remaining in the sphere of the truths in matters of fact (*in facti rebus*), because it allows us to learn opinions and teachings that have already been professed in the course of history but that can be recovered and verified in the present. Because of this function, the author places the history of philosophy among the instrumental disciplines with metaphysics and logic, but distinct from the theoretical disciplines to which it serves as an introduction, such as natural theology, physics, pneumatology, law, ethics, and politics.

It is possible to verify the usefulness of the history of philosophy in a concrete way. Recalling Heumann's observations on this subject, Gentzken emphasized the contribution of *historia philosophica* to the education and philosophical training of the individual. It liberates us from "ignominious" ignorance, frees us from the prejudices of authority and school learning, teaches us the origin of philosophical theories, and makes it possible to arrive at a more adequate interpretation of the Church Fathers and the ancient jurists (*Historia philosophiae*, p. 2).

These observations specifically remind us of Heumann. Gentzken's manual was also the first to use the cautious criticisms and suggestions contained in the *Acta philosophorum* on a methodological level, something that led him, among other things, to take a more conscious attitude to his choice and use of sources. He declares that it is not possible to write history if written documents do not exist, "without which history cannot be written" (*Historia philosophiae*, p. 2), and for this reason he excludes all the fantastic ideas concerning the presumed wisdom of the ancient Patriarchs, and decides that historical reconstruction cannot not go back as far as Noah or even Adam but must start from the Babylonian captivity, the period from which we have the earliest documents.

7.1.4. *Historia philosophiae*

7.1.4.1. The *Historia philosophiae*, used here in the 1725 edition, is divided into three parts, preceded by a preface and by the "Prolegomena" (pp. 1–3), in which some theoretical and methodological questions are discussed. The first part "showing the history of the philosophy of ancient times (*aevi veteris*)" (pp. 3–138), comprises Barbarian, Greek, and Roman philosophy; the second describes "the history of the Middle Ages (*aevi medii*)" (pp. 139–150); and the final part, "showing the history of the philosophy of recent times (*aevi recentis*)", is divided into three: (1) "De veterum sectarum instauratoribus", pp. 151–170; (2) "De novatoribus in philosophia", pp. 171–262; (3) "De sectarum conciliatoribus", pp. 262–264. A more detailed sub-division is provided by the chapters, each examining a school of philosophy, and by the paragraphs, which have no headings. The bibliographical references, abundant throughout, are inserted in the text. The book ends with an "Index" of subjects and names. In all, there are 246 octavo pages.

7.1.4.2. The history of philosophy is divided into three periods: ancient, medieval, and modern. Ancient history is further divided, on the basis of geographical area: on the one hand the Barbarians (Hebrews, Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, Indians, and Chinese), on the other the civilized peoples (Greeks and Romans). Greek philosophy "can be described in two periods" (p. 36): the period of the wise men and the period of the philosophical schools. In his description of the schools, Gentzken does not keep to his historico-chronological criterion but follows the order and origin of the schools. First of all comes the Pythagorean school, from which "the Eleatic originated" and then the Epicurean and the Sceptic. Then came the Ionic direction (Thales) with Socrates as its second founder; all the other schools date back to him: the Cyrenaics, Academics, Peripatetics, Cynics, and Stoics. The distinction between Roman and Greek philosophy is chronological rather than geographical: Gentzken considers the Roman philosophers to be those who lived between the first century B.C. and the sixth century A.D. (Lucretius, Seneca, Plutarch, Plotinus, Porphyry, and Boethius).

The second period, between the Barbarian invasions and the Renaissance, includes Arabic and Scholastic philosophy, characterized by Aristotelianism. The modern age began when "sound letters began to breathe"; and three paths followed from this: "For some tried to *restore* the ancient sects, some to explain philosophy

more correctly and almost to *renew* it all or some parts of it, and finally others tried to *reconcile* ancient philosophies with each other or with modern philosophies" (p. 151).

The division of modern philosophy into three parts on the basis of the different character of philosophical research, which at various times was applied to restoration, innovation, or reconciliation, is indicative of the purpose attributed to the division into periods: to use order to obtain greater didactic effectiveness, enabling the reader to grasp the diversity of the forms and themes associated with the philosophical speculation of each period. What is worthy of note is the effort, present for the first time in a textbook, to introduce the various epochs with some mention of the problem of periodization: the first paragraph of each of the three sections into which the history of philosophy is sub-divided is devoted to this topic.

7.1.4.3. The first area examined is, in accordance with the most widespread historical tradition, Hebrew thought. As we have seen, this is not taken back to the ancient Patriarchs but only as far as the Babylonian captivity, it includes Cabbalistic speculation, and goes up to the modern era (Maimonides, Ben Israel). The Cabbalistic teachings developed from the encounter of ancient wisdom with Greek philosophy; this is why the process of emanation was introduced to explain the creation, and acting intelligence was understood not as a faculty of the soul "but as the divinity itself, which caused the human intellect to pass from potency (*potentia*) to act" (p. 10).

While he did not accept the idea that Eastern wisdom was superior to Greek philosophy, Gentzken did not share the radical attitude of those like Heumann who had rejected it: the Chaldeans, for example, applied themselves to theology, physics, astrology and magic, even if they were "rather superstitious". The Eastern peoples differed from the Greeks first of all in their way of teaching *inter certas familias* and in the independence and detachment of their public life. This attitude conditioned their moral teaching, as can be seen from the Gymnosophists who exerted a negative influence on many Greek philosophers.

The treatment of Greek philosophy follows the framework used by Laertius: it is described according to the two currents, Italic going back to Pythagoras, and Ionic to Thales. As well as the true Pythagoreans, the Pythagorean direction includes the Eleatic, Epicurean, and Sceptic schools. The greatest exponent of Eleatism is considered to be not Parmenides but Democritus, who declared that the foundation of theoretical philosophy was that "all things are composed of atoms", and that the principle of practical philosophy is that "blessedness in this life consists of the state of quietness" (pp. 56–57). In this sense Epicurus was one who continued Eleatism while Pyrrho rejected the dogmatism of the school and proclaimed himself a Sceptic.

All the other schools go back to the Ionic branch by way of the teaching of Socrates: "He was the first to lead men from the life of speculation to practice and to pure habits, and even ordered that moral teaching should be studied rather than physics" (p. 73). He established the principle "to live well" (*bene vivere*) as a moral precept, but committed the error of separating the just from the useful "although they are things very closely linked by nature" (p. 76). Plato continued the work of integrating philosophy: "While philosophy initially consisted only of *Physics*,

Socrates added *Ethics*, and Plato completed it with *Dialectics*, following Heraclitus in the first, Socrates in the second, and in the third Zeno and Parmenides of Elea" (p. 84). The text which serves as a basis for his reconstruction of the Platonic system is the *Timaeus*, interpreted according to a Neoplatonic framework: "The principles of all things are God and matter. God brought this confused and chaotic matter into the order of forms and numbers; however he did not act directly but indirectly (*mediate*). He maintained that these things emanated from God: (1) the ideas or exemplary types of all things; (2) the *logos* or the acting intellect [. . .] so that he can give order to the world according to the ideas; (3) the *psyche*, or soul, as the effusion of the mind which spreads throughout the universe, to bind it, to conserve it, and to give it life" (pp. 86–87). The presence of Christian elements is no longer understood in a positive sense as a sign of the superiority of the Platonic school and of its derivation from original wisdom, as for Zierold, but as an opportunity for the emergence of heresies. This apparent agreement was in fact the cause of dangerous contaminations: "The Fathers of the Church were great scholars of Platonic philosophy; even Origen, misled by it, was the author of one particular heresy. Because of this, it is expedient that students of theology should know Plato's philosophy, because without it the writings of the Fathers cannot be correctly read and understood. The so-called *mystical theology* owes its origin to Plato's philosophy, and *Scholastic theology* also drives from Aristotelian philosophy" (pp. 80–81).

Among the Greek schools, those that aroused the most serious threats, at least as far as the concept of God was concerned, were the Peripatetics and the Stoics. For Aristotle the world was eternal, and so was movement; this leads to an eternal substance that moves all things without being moved, that is to say God: "From this it is clear that Aristotle understood God as *forma mundi assistens*" (p. 95). This formula had been used by Jakob Thomasius and was taken up again by Buddeus to prove that the Aristotelian system leaned towards Spinozism; Aristotelianism therefore is considered to be nearer to Stoicism than to Platonism. Gentzken devotes plenty of space to the moral teaching of the Stoics, "which a number of the Fathers [of the Church] judged to be very similar to the teachings of Christianity" (p. 116); but by defining God as "the reason of the world" they submit the universe to the rule of fate, that is, to Spinozist necessity. He also strongly criticises their formalism: "they would have preferred to distinguish themselves by words and not by substance" (p. 114).

Philosophical speculation in the Roman period showed little originality: no new currents of thought appeared, but the Greek schools survived. Cicero translated philosophical discourse into Latin terminology. Seneca wished to appear eclectic but was in reality a Stoic. Plotinus limited his efforts to illustrating Platonic teaching: "He wrote 54 books which his disciple Porphyry divided into six Enneads. First of all, he explains Platonic teaching, allowing Marsilius Ficinus to give this opinion on Plotinus: 'He who listens to Plotinus should think he is listening to Plato; and indeed, either Plato re-lived in Plotinus or the same demon who first inspired Plato then inspired Plotinus'. Sometimes, following Socrates's example, Plotinus boasted that he possessed a genius and certainly a genius greater than the demons" (p. 134).

The Middle Ages were marked by the abandonment of Ancient philosophy, and the Barbarian invasions and the fall of the Roman Empire signalled the end of Ancient culture: "After the Western Roman Empire was destroyed by the German and Scythian peoples, and that of the East was almost destroyed by the Saracens, public schools disappeared completely in the West, from the 6th century in Italy, England, Spain, and Africa, and from the 7th century in the East too, in Asia, Greece, and Egypt. Furthermore, nearly all Greek and Latin learning passed to the Arabs, who embraced the teaching of Aristotle in particular and translated his writings and those of the other wise men of Greece into their own language" (pp. 138–139). Thus Aristotle was known in the West according to the Arab interpretation, that is to say in a form substantially distorted due to ignorance of the Greek language and obedience to the principle of authority. But the Scholastics found a way of corrupting Aristotelian thought even further with their tendency to combine philosophy with theology and their fondness for hair-splitting logic: "Scholastic philosophy was barbarous, obscure, confused, and fond of quibbling. In all areas of philosophy it displayed a quarrelsome and ambiguous subtlety, since they [the Scholastics] prevailed only in the realm of abstract notions, accumulating, with much effort, one foolish idea after another. They made objections to everything and the solutions they proposed were based on verbal distinctions only" (p. 147). Unlike some historians who had re-evaluated those Scholastics who had been interested in natural questions, Gentzken condemned all scholastic physics, enmeshed as it was with metaphysical abstractions: "In natural philosophy they took too much delight in metaphysical abstractions, foolishly supposing that by describing the active quality with a high-sounding term they had found the cause of the phenomenon, in such a way that all of their physics was merely conceptual wisdom" (p. 148).

Modern philosophy is interpreted as a demand for a freer way of understanding philosophical research, first of all as a rejection of the principle of authority. As we have seen, three currents evolved from this: the ancient schools were revived in opposition to the Scholastics' exclusive love of Aristotle; others reconciled the ancient philosophers with each other or the Greek philosophers with the Bible (Sennert, Keckermann); but the most relevant work was that done by the *Novatores* "who, having rejected the prejudice of authority, began to give philosophy something new with respect to the Ancients and the Scholastics, and more in harmony with the demands of reason" (p. 171). Those who reformed the whole of philosophy were Cardanus, Francis Bacon, Campanella and, greater than all of them, Leibniz. For the first time in a history of philosophy the author speaks at length of Leibniz, whose monadology is explained, and a positive appraisal is given of Ch. Wolff, "who with remarkably well-expressed brilliance defended Leibniz' theories in various very learned writings" (p. 182). Descartes's philosophy is accorded less importance than that of Leibniz, although it is judged positively, and Descartes is placed among the restorers of natural philosophy, together with Cudworth, the chemists, and the "systematics" (Copernicus, Brahe): "And as he was devoting himself to the study of mathematics, he made use of it to correct other disciplines too, physics especially, establishing a new foundation, so that in his *Epist. de Philosophia cartesiana* Henry

More did not hesitate to declare of Descartes that in his search for the causes of nature he knew as much as Aristotle was ignorant of" (p. 228).

When speaking of the reformers of the other branches of philosophy too Gentzken shows a preference for those closest to his own time: for rational philosophy he mentions Malebranche, Locke, and Tschirnhaus; and for moral philosophy Grotius, Hobbes, Pufendorf, and above all Christian Thomasius, "the tenacious defender of philosophical freedom in Germany". The lengthy references to contemporary philosophical debate are an indicator of the extreme freedom with which Gentzken associated himself with the philosophy of his time, bringing to centre stage problems and authors then very topical, if we reflect that in these very years Wolff was being accused of Spinozism by the Pietists, and Thomasius represented the new current of non-conformist and anti-Scholastic thought, considered by some as dangerous for the faith if not actually heterodox.

7.1.4.4. Gentzken's course book was appreciated for the clarity and order of its arrangement: "In these pages I have decided to set out for the use of students those subjects concerning the history of philosophy that they ought to know and that are also pleasant to learn, following a method that is suitable for the material treated and with the greatest possible brevity and clarity" ("Lectori benevolo"). He was attempting to respond to two needs: to lead the reader to a knowledge of what was useful, but at the same time agreeable, so that reading the book would be pleasant as well as instructive. The account is arranged in three parts: for each famous philosopher or founder of a school he describes episodes in his life (*vita*), then his teachings (*hypotheses*), and lastly their subsequent fortune (*fata*).

In the section on the philosopher's life Gentzken presents all the useful information needed for portraying his personality, his schooling, his links with other thinkers, his philosophical output, and his famous sayings. Some of these pieces of information could contribute towards a better understanding of the system, as when Plato's genius is defined as "more adept at considering the causes of immaterial things than those of corporeal things" (p. 85), but the main motivation seems to have been to offer a complete body of information likely to stimulate the reader's curiosity and interest: "[Plato] went to Sicily three times, with various results, and experienced sometimes the gratitude and sometimes the indignation of the two Dionysiuses [Dionysius the Elder, and Dionysius the Younger]. He did not wish to govern the state but did not refuse to advise Dion and many other princes. For the rest, he was modest, gentle, kindly, and prudent, and he remained celibate. He ate only once a day, or, if he ate twice, he did so very frugally" (p. 85).

The most extensive part consists of the *hypotheses*, that is, the section that examines philosophical teachings in order and methodically. The historian's work here is integrated with that of the philosopher. The teachings are not presented in a fragmentary way but are reduced to "philosophemes" and arranged according to a systematic view of philosophy. The division used the most is that between *philosophia theoretica* and *philosophia practica*, preceded, from Aristotle onwards, by *philosophia instrumentalis* or *logica*. The philosophemes are arranged in order in such a way that the first, more general, ones, support and prove the others: "Given that the wise

man arranges his ideas in such a way that the present ones derive from the preceding ones, in the same way one should observe a correct sequence and a regular order in one's work and actions" ("De natura et indole philosophiae", p. 5). The procedure is that used in the universities; the purpose was not only to inform the reader of the philosophers' main teachings but also to show the logical path of reasoning that led to particular conclusions. An example is the way in which the first part of Aristotelian metaphysics is presented: "1. The world is eternal, and so is motion. 2. Therefore there is an eternal substance, not only the one in which that motion exists, that is the heavens, but also another substance that always moves every other thing actively. 3. That first Mover of all things is God, who moves yet himself remains immobile. It follows from this that Aristotle understood God as *forma mundi assistens.* 4. The *primum mobile* or heaven is eternal like the first Mover, and attracts the seven spheres of the planets to itself more slowly or more rapidly. 5. There are eternal intelligences as movers of the inferior spheres" (p. 95).

At the end of each chapter, Gentzken describes the "fortune" of the various schools. This is understood in a double sense, as the continuation of the life of the school, and the influence that it exercised on other streams of thought. For example, the "destinies" of Platonic philosophy include the history of the Academy and the Platonism of the early centuries of the Christian era. Secondly, "fortune" is understood as the history of ancient and, more often, modern, interpretations of philosophical systems. Thus for Epicurus (pp. 64–65) Gentzken mentions the negative interpretation of the Stoics, counterbalanced by the more positive opinions, as early as the ancient world (Cicero and Seneca), up to the apologies of Gassendi and Jacques Du Rondel.

Despite the limitations imposed by the work's function as a textbook, Gentzken's work shows a notable methodological awareness, revealed clearly in its attitude toward historical documents: they are indispensable tools for a reconstruction of philosophical thought if it is to be historically reliable. Such a position is clear, as we have seen, in relation to the Patriarchs: "And indeed we acknowledge that the first men dedicated themselves to speculation, but we cannot affirm anything with certainty, since no documents have come down to us, and without them history cannot be written" (p. 2). On the whole it can be said that Gentzken's textbook is reasonably well documented, particularly in its very frequent reference to ancient and modern historiography.

The author does not always declare explicitly what sources he has consulted; however, it seems clear in the biographical sections that he had read Laertius and Stanley. In his account of the teachings, the need to present an organic picture does not allow for a simple listing of the works of the philosophers, but it is frequently evident that they have been consulted, as is seen from the definition of philosophy attributed to Epicurus ("it is the practice of reason, through which the wise man, by meditating and discussing, prepares a happy life for himself and enjoys it": p. 60), taken from the first part of the letter to Meneceus. However, it should be noted that Gentzken prefers to refer to Laertius in every case, even when he could have looked at the works of the philosophers directly. Among modern historians Buddeus is often cited.

A final aspect to be emphasized is objectivity as a historical criterion, which is given increasing importance. Any criticisms of systems or single theories are, like the author's observations, limited in number, and the historiographical reconstruction is offered as an impartial account which the reader can then subject to discussion and interpretation.

7.1.5. Gentzken's textbook met with the immediate approval of his contemporaries, who judged it to be the best written so far and the most complete and suitable for academic courses: "This history goes up to our times and does not omit Ch. Thomasius who is defined as the 'tenacious defender of philosophical freedom in Germany'; however we can affirm that this is the best and the most well-arranged compendium of philosophical history" (AE, 1725, p. 169). They praised its order and clarity: "the history of philosophy is written in an orderly fashion, clearly and shrewdly enough" (Stolle, p. 75). It was indeed it the most widely-used textbook in German universities for several decades. At the end of a brief summary of the history of philosophy in his textbook of logic, Martin Knutzen invited his students to extend their studies by using Gentzken's *Historia philosophiae* (M. Knutzen, *Elementa philosophiae rationalis seu Logicae*, Leipzig, 1747, p. 32). Again, in 1771, Kant recommended Gentzken's book to the students following his course on logic (cf. Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Bd. XXIV [1], *Logik Blomberg*, p. 28); from 1755 Kant had used the textbook to formulate a framework for the historical introductions to his courses on logic (*Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. XVI, pp. 56–57, "Reflexion zur Logik" 1635).

The later fortune of the work, which lasted longer than that of the *Systema philosophiae* of which it was a part, can be explained by the poor quality of textbooks on the history of philosophy; however there had been a keen awareness of the need for academic courses on philosophy to be preceded by lectures on the history of philosophy since the time of Thomasius and Buddeus. The writings of Zierold and Johann Christoph Wolf did not fulfil this need as they had an explicit aim and theoretical foundation: Thomasius's scheme was too brief and Buddeus's *Compendium*, although appreciated in many areas, was fragmentary, the explanatory notes having been added only later to the basic text which was itself too succinct. Gentzken himself was conscious of the limitations of previous histories of philosophy: "Once again a history of philosophy comes into being, enriched with the life of Leibnitz; although the subject has been dealt with briefly by many authors before now, anyone who has any expertise in these matters will admit that it has as yet been treated in too briefly, not to speak of the confusion that many have been introduced into it. Therefore it follows that those who are advanced in philosophical studies have no encouragement to learn this kind of science, which should, on the contrary, be the other eye of philosophical wisdom" (*Historia philosophiae*, "Lectori benevolo").

Gentzken operated on a different level: the theoretical premises, so evident in earlier histories of philosophy, no longer condition the historical reconstruction, which was as faithful and as accurate as possible and made little use of critical observations. Moreover, the historian was attentive to methodological questions, took great care over periodization, and divided the material in a more organic and precise way.

His aim was to produce a work which, while it was aimed at the world of university studies and not at specialists, could provide sufficiently exhaustive information not only on the history of philosophical schools but also on their teachings. The listing of the *hypotheses* in which the essential points of each system are summarized is emphasized by placing it in an appropriate section. Indeed this approach has the merit of concentrating the reader's attention on the content of the various philosophical systems, allowing their theoretical value to be easily grasped; but it has perhaps the fault of isolating the biographical description, which the author rarely starts with in order to illustrate the teachings themselves better.

The effectiveness and completeness of Gentzken's book are also the result of his attention and sensitivity towards Heumann's work on the theoretical aspect of the history of philosophy. Gentzken was the first to attempt to put into practice, albeit in the reduced form of a summary, the plan set out in the *Acta philosophorum*, and in this sense he anticipated the work of Brucker.

7.1.6. On Gentzken's life and works: Jöcher (Erg), II, cols. 1400–1401; Heinsius, II, p. 63; F. Volbehr, *Professoren und Dozenten der Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel (1665–1954)* (Kiel, 1956). On the *Systema philosophiae*: Wundt, pp. 116–117 and 210. For contemporary opinions: Stolle, p. 750, Struve, I, p. 161; Schmersahl, p. 12; Brucker, I, p. 38; M. Knutzen, *Elementa philosophiae rationalis seu Logicae* (Leipzig, 1747), p. 32. Review of the *Systema philosophiae* in AE, 1725, pp. 168–172. A comparison between the *Historia philosophiae* and Kant's lectures on the history of philosophy is in Feldmann, "Die Geschichte der Philosophie", pp. 177–184, and Micheli, *Kant storico della filosofia*, pp. 67–71.

7.2 Lorenz Reinhard (1700–1752)

Compendium Historiae philosophiae

7.2.1. Lorenz Reinhard, the son of a vet, was born in Hellingen near Königsberg in 1700. He received his early education at the grammar school at Hildburghausen, then went to the University of Jena, where he studied Philosophy and Theology under Buddeus and Weissenborn. He spent nearly all his life in teaching, first at the grammar school in Hildburghausen and then from 1727 at that in Weimar, combining his teaching of Theology, History and Morals with the responsibilities of the catechist, deacon, and preacher. In 1745, after a brief stay in Göttingen and Altdorf, he became superintendant in Buttstedt (Grand Duchy of Weimar) where he worked in particular on the reform of the school system and the catechism courses. He collaborated on various reviews, among them, while still in his twenties, the *Miscellanea Lipsiensia*. He died in Buttstedt in 1752.

7.2.2. Reinhard's writings, all for educational purposes, can be divided into three groups according to subject matter. Firstly, there are the works on theology and religious controversy: *Dissertatio Theologica qua librum Sapientiae nec esse canonicum neque a Salomone conscriptum contra quendam virum*

comprobatur (Wittenberg, 1719), in which he refutes Gundling's contrary point of view; *Institutiones theologiae dogmaticae* (Weimar-Leipzig, 1770[6]), republished many times and widely circulated in Europe, especially in the Nordic countries; *Observationes philologicae-exegeticae in Evangelium S. Lucae selectissimae, quibus Thomas Kackspanii, Jo. Christophori Wolfii et Christiani Stockii adnotationes supplentur et augentur* (Leipzig, 1748); *Ueberzeugender Beweiss, dass die evangelische Religion höchst vernünftig sei und das seine Glaubenslehre und keine Geheimniss in derselben wider wahren Grundsätze der gesunden Vernunft streitet* (Jena, 1752), in which, as well as tackling the topical subject of the rationality of religion, he developed a religious and confessional polemic, demonstrating the superiority of the Lutheran faith over the others.

There is another series of writings on the reform of education and the teaching of ancient literature: "Observationes de justo pretio elegantioribus litteris et philosophiae statuendo", ML, X (1720), pp. 41–58; *De Graecae linguae fatis commentatio. Accessit Epistola ad Burchardum de ratione docendae discendaeque linguae latinae* (Wittenberg, 1722); *Institutiones styli Latini. Accesserunt orationes duae de incrementis, quae Latina et Graeca philologia in Germania saeculo XVII coepit* (Erfurt-Leipzig, 1728); *Historia Graecae linguae critico-litteraria* (Leipzig, 1724).

Reinhardt's writings on the history of philosophy are closely linked to those on philosophy. The *Compendium Historiae philosophicae, cuius pars prima omnes philosophorum sectas earumque dogmata enarrat, altera vero singularum disciplinarum philosophicarum fata speciatim recenset* (Leipzig: Impensis Heredum Frid. Lanckisii, 1725, 1735[2]), is an appropriate historical introduction to the system of philosophy, written for school use and published the following years: *Synopsis philosophiae rationalis sive Logica. Accessit oratio de variis scholarum, quae inter Christianos viguere, mutationibus* (Erfurt-Leipzig, 1730); *Synopsis philosophiae moralis. Praemissa est commentatio de fatis philosophiae moralis* (Weimar, 1733). In this last work the history of moral philosophy (which takes up pp. 15–86) refers back to the analogous works by Gundling and Stolle and is interesting for the space assigned to the modern reformers of the discipline and for the attention paid to the debate that developed in the early eighteenth century (Buddeus, Coccejus, Rechenberger, Gundling, Rüdiger, Wolff). Reinhard was also the author of a history of natural law: *Historia iurisprudentiae naturalis in qua varia huius doctrinae fata secundum seriem temporum recensentur* (Leipzig, 1725). The series of writings on philosophy concludes with a compendium on natural philosophy: *Synopsis philosophiae naturalis sive Physica in compendium redacta* (Leipzig-Weimar, 1734).

7.2.3. The history of philosophy was treated by Reinhard with strictly didactic purposes. "I have made a compendium, not a system; I have written not for the learned but for the use and convenience of those who are learning", as a preparation for academic courses in philosophy. Recalling the specific suggestion of his own teachers, Reinhard notes: "Since the first moment I had the opportunity, during my study of philosophy, to enjoy the teaching of some very learned men (G. Stolle and

B.H. Ehrenberger), I have had a strong desire to study the history of philosophy; this is mainly because these men, before beginning their philosophy courses, used to give their listeners a summary of the historical events of the various disciplines" (*Compendium*, "Lectori benevolo").

Reinhard's *Compendium* drew its inspiration from that of Buddeus, which it was meant to complete. It was implicit that his way of conceiving the history of philosophy should also be analogous; this history was an introduction to philosophical studies and a complement to courses in theology: "Anyone who has carefully examined the moral teaching of the ancient philosophers will know that it is more brilliant than reliable; from this it is easy to judge the perfection of Christian ethics. Thus knowledge of the history of philosophy is very useful to study Church history better, and in fact it is well known to those who have some knowledge of Church history that quite a number of errors originated from Platonic and Stoic philosophies" ("Observationes de justo pretio elegantioribus litteris et philosophiae statuendo", ML, IX [1720], pp. 55–56). The greatest interest was, as Gerhard suggested, of a theological nature: the history of philosophy gives us the opportunity to grasp the superiority of Christianity over all teaching of human origin, and to pick out the many errors that made their way into Christian dogmatics through contamination by pagan philosophies. Emphasizing the possibilities implicit in philosophical historiography, Reinhard thus invited students of theology to make use of this discipline, which students of the faculty of philosophy were naturally primarily interested in.

7.2.4. *Compendium historiae philosophicae*

7.2.4.1. The *Compendium* has two prefaces, one by Heinrich Nicolaus Panzerbiter, the second ("Lectori benevolo") by the author himself. As is shown in the subtitle, the work is divided into two parts: in the first, the author presents a panorama of all the schools of philosophy (pp. 1–152) in seven chapters: 1. "De philosophia Barbarica" (pp. 3–49); 2. "De philosophia Pythagorica" (pp. 49–59); 3. "De philosophia Graecanica" (pp. 59–119); 4. "De philosophia Romanorum" (pp. 119–125); 5. "De philosophia Medii Aevi in genere" (pp. 125–140); 6. "De reformatione philosophiae" (pp. 140–149); and 7. "De philosophia eclectica recentiori" (pp. 149–152). The chapters on the "Barbarians", the Greeks, and the Middle Ages are further divided into sections, each on one school.

The second part, which outlines the history of each philosophical discipline (pp. 153–220), consists of five chapters: 1. "De philosophia prima" (pp. 155–172); 2. "De philosophia rationali" (pp. 172–186); 3. "De philosophia naturali" (pp. 186–198); 4. "De philosophia morali" (pp. 198–215); 5. "De philosophia civili seu Politica" (pp. 215–220).

7.2.4.2. The history of philosophy is sub-divided into seven sectors, corresponding to the seven chapters of the first part of the *Compendium*. This cannot strictly speaking be described as periodization, since the various epochs are not classified but are characterized by the particular philosophical methods or, more frequently, by the geographical position of the schools. Thus the ancient period is divided into Barbarian, Pythagorean, Greek, and Roman philosophy. The Pythagorean school

"because of its difference [. . .] from the Barbarian and Greek" is treated separately, after the Barbarians and before the Greeks, following a suggestion by Buddeus. It should be noticed that when speaking of the Barbarians Reinhard does not expressly mention the Hebrews.

Greek philosophy is divided according to the usual framework: firstly there is the period of the Seven Wise Men and the poets, then the formation of the three great branches: Ionics, Eleatics, and Eclectics. Socrates emerged from the first of these, and nearly all of the other Greek schools originated from him: the Cyrenaics, the school of Elis, the Megarians, Academics, Peripatetics, Cynics, Stoics and Sceptics. Those who belonged to the Eleatic school, beside Xenophanes and Parmenides, were the atomists and Epicurus. Finally, those considered to be Eclectics were Potamon, Sotion, Ammonius, Plotinus and, among the Church Fathers, Clement, Origen, and Lactantius.

Medieval philosophy is divided into two schools, the Arabs and the Scholastics. Modern philosophy also is divided into two important moments. First considered is its attempt to reform the barbarities of Scholasticism ("De reformatione philosophiae"); the restorers of the ancient schools worked to this end and so, in a different way, did the inventors of new systems (Bacon, Descartes, Grotius). In the second phase the eclectics appeared ("De philosophia eclectica recentiori"): they with their full understanding took a stand against all sectarian spirit and fought for freedom of opinion and choice (Pufendorf, Ch. Thomasius, Le Clerc, Buddeus).

7.2.4.3. However, Reinhard picked out from such diversity of opinions a number of common features in the philosophical teachings of the Barbarians: they used myths and riddles, and this implied a two levels of understanding, a higher one reserved to the elect and a more elementary one for the common people. The effort of the Barbarians to correct morals was praiseworthy, but their teaching on the divinity remained idolatrous and their hypotheses on the origin of the world were pure fantasy. Some of these elements, such as the double level of their philosophical method, were continued by Pythagoras, who was nevertheless the first to define philosophy as "knowledge of being", and to discover the wonderful harmony of the world, "with which no doubt he wanted to explain that in creating things God observed precise harmony, and that he has preserved all things in a wonderful way" (p. 55).

The Ionic school originated with Thales, one of the Seven Wise Men. In its early stage interest in nature and strong leanings towards atheism were prevalent (Anaximander, Anaximenes, Anaxagoras). Socrates revolutionized the themes treated by the school and led it to deal with man. Among the ancients, much importance was attributed to Plato, who had a profound knowledge of the Mosaic texts: "Therefore it is not surprising that Plato philosophized in a truly excellent manner on God and divine things, and that he obtained the title 'divine' " (p. 86). Reinhard found three proofs of the existence of God in Plato's works: "a) from the testimony of ancestors; b) from the contemplation of this universe [. . .]; and c) from the agreement (*consensus*) of many peoples" (p. 87), thus proving his fundamental theism. Despite this he underlined the fact that many Platonist beliefs were quite foreign to Christianity: his theory of ideas, for example, understood as the forms of things

"that existed before the things themselves were brought about" (p. 88), was totally erroneous and the cause of the Gnostic heresy.

Plato's fault is lack of clarity; his style is poetic, not very suitable for philosophy. Aristotle, on the other hand, has the merits of order and clarity; indeed, he was the first to conceive of philosophy in a systematic way (*primus systematicus fuit*: p. 96). In his interpretation of Aristotelian philosophy, Reinhard followed the strongly anti-Peripatetic direction that inspired the group around Thomasius and Buddeus. Metaphysics leads to atheism: "For he taught that the world is eternal and that it was created by God in a necessary way, and that God is joined to the world by an almost necessary bond in the manner of an assisting form" (p. 97). In logic Aristotle used excessive subtlety "even to the extent of weakness"; finally, his ethics was definitely to be rejected, as he understood virtue as mediocrity, "which is none other than the art of sinning and of concealing vices!" (p. 100).

This condemnation of Aristotle is followed by that of the Stoics, accused in the first place of hypocrisy. Their logic is full of sophistry and their theology is atheistic: "they taught that God is the soul of the world or the simple and fiery essence spread in a material way in the universe, of which it is the form; that the world is composed of this soul of the world and of a rougher matter; that the soul of man is a small piece of the divine essence or of the soul of the world; that everything is ruled by fate, that is, by the unmoving and unmovable order of things, and that God himself is necessarily subject to fate" (p. 105).

The Eleatic branch, from Xenophanes to Epicurus, is characterized by the constant factor of atheism. Xenophanes once said that "all things are one, and that one is God, the spherical substance"; and Parmenides repeated that "all are one, and the one is unmoving and without beginning: he taught that the multitude of things was only apparent and that in truth all things were one". Leucippus, the disciple of Zeno, added the atomist doctrine to their teaching, though it was interpreted in an ungodly way: "that all things were made from atoms [. . .] by means of the chance collision between them". The interpretation of Epicurus, on the other hand, is controversial, and Reinhard the historian offers both negative (Buddeus) and positive (Du Rondel) opinions.

After speaking briefly of the Romans, who did not form any school "but embraced the theories of the Greeks" (p. 119), Reinhard mentions the philosophy of the Church Fathers, in order to record the harm done to the principles of the faith by the contamination of pagan teachings "from which, just as from the Trojan horse, several heresies sprang" (p. 127).

He moves on next to the Scholastics, "those indolent little men, thoughtless corrupters of every more rational philosophy" (p. 207). They combined philosophy and theology, they chose Aristotle and the Arabs as their guide, and they used philosophy to strengthen the Papal throne. They were divided into two groups, the Nominalists founded, and this is strange, by Thomas Aquinas, and the Realists, beginning with Duns Scotus: "The founder of the school of the Nominalists was Thomas Aquinas [. . .]. The founder of the school of the Realists was John Duns Scotus. The Nominalists or Thomists taught that in *praedicabilia* and *praedicamenta* there are no things but only bare names; the Realists or Scotists decided that in *praedicabilia*

and *praedicamenta* there are no bare names but things. The teaching of Roscellinus preceded the school of the Nominalists" (p. 134). They corrupted all parts of philosophy, including physics, which they obscured with purely speculative questions neglecting experiment completely. Albertus Magnus and Roger Bacon however are exempt from this condemnation, as they were in Buddeus: "in fact, these people dedicated themselves primarily to experimental physics rather than to vain discussions and useless distinctions" (p. 135).

Modern philosophers are treated briefly in the final two chapters of the historical part of the book; however, they are mentioned again at length in the second part of the book, which is an introduction to the systematic study of philosophy. There is little interest in the restorers of the Greek schools; instead, more attention is given to Francis Bacon, Descartes, and the modern eclectics. Bacon is appreciated for his struggle against sectarianism: he did not restrict himself to criticizing syllogistic logic, but saw physics in a new way, "he exhorted everyone to leave aside useless speculations, and consider the nature of things with the aid of experiments" (p. 144). Descartes also rejected the syllogism, but his method was incomplete: "the rules of Descartes do not provide any help towards the knowledge of probable or likely truths" (p. 146).

Eclectic philosophy, founded on free rational research, is the most important conquest of the modern age, and its representatives are Germans: Ch. Thomasius, Buddeus, Rüdiger, Gundling, Wolff, and Syrbius. Indeed, the entire history of philosophy is given a sense by accepting the lesson of the eclectics, appreciated not so much for their teachings as for their reform of philosophical method, no longer dogmatic but free, the only way of guaranteeing authentic progress in the philosophical disciplines.

The second part, in which the history of the individual philosophical doctrines is examined, does not address any questions of historiographical theory but offers a panorama of writers and works for each discipline, with particular reference to modern writings. For logic ("De philosophia rationali seu Logica", pp. 172–186) Reinhard records the contributions made by Raymond Lull, Valla, Vives, Ramus, Nizolio, Keckermann, Bacon, Descartes, Gassendi, and Locke, and concludes with the German eclectic writers. The purpose of this section is strictly didactic: it offers students a list of texts on which to base their philosophical training.

7.2.4.4. The history of philosophy is an introduction to the study of philosophy; that is, it prepares the reader for the study of philosophical texts. The historiographical method serves this function. Systems and philosophical teachings are of more interest than biographical events. Socrates, who in earlier historiography was recorded almost exclusively for his life, habits, and death, or at the most for his sayings, is presented here because of his contribution to rational and moral philosophy: "It is by no means necessary to talk about his military service or his responsibilities as a senator or the unjust accusations that ungodly men made against him; in fact I do not intend to narrate the lives of the philosophers, but rather their teachings" (p. 73). Rather than dwell on specific biographical details of a philosopher, Reinhard records his philosophical training, the masters he followed, and his philosophical method.

The sober presentation of Diogenes the Cynic is typical of this procedure: in earlier histories of philosophy he had been mentioned mainly for his sharp wit or for spicy and amusing episodes involving him: "Diogenes, who was so ridiculous as to live in a barrel, was a disciple of Antisthenes; he often hid great wisdom under the appearance of foolishness; he often railed against the vices of others and brought down the pride of the philosophers, and he wholly despised riches" (p. 103).

Reinhard's main interest was in the system. He follows the traditional division of philosophy was followed: first of all logic, then natural theology or metaphysics, then physics, and finally moral philosophy, frequently followed by politics. The teachings and opinions of the philosophers are not taken directly from their works but are put together in a way that makes for easy understanding and clear interpretation. On Platonic morality, for example, he states that: "he taught that the highest good consists of becoming like God and that what is necessary in order to attain this is knowledge of oneself, the purification and conversion of the soul, and contemplation of God, or, to sum it up in one word, philosophical death (*mors philosophica*); in fact, according to Plato philosophical death was the freeing of the mind from its link with the body, and its elevation to God; in this he was following Pythagoras and he contributed to the spread of enthusiasm" (p. 92). In using the term *mors philosophica* Reinhard is referring to two dialogues, the *Phaedo* and *Alcibiades*, but also to Buddeus at the same time; this gives him the opportunity to interpret the *elevatio ad Deum* as a dangerous form of "enthusiasm".

The author does not carry out an "objective" reconstruction detached from the teachings, but on every subject, especially if it is linked to theology in some way, he expresses a precise judgement regarding the value and dangers of each philosophy. This attitude indeed reflects two aspects of the book: its didactic character, which makes it necessary to put students on their guard against false teachings, and the eclecticism that informed Reinhard's philosophical method and which implied the ability to weigh up the various systems in search of statements that can be rationally justified and accepted on a theoretical level.

7.2.5. While Reinhard's *Compendium historiae philosophicae* was contemporary with Gentzken's manual, it did not enjoy the same circulation. It was a work of his youth, and his intention was to integrate it with Buddeus's *Historiae philosophicae succincta delineatio*, whose approach and historiographical theses he wholly agreed with. The book was not mentioned by Heumann but was cited by Brucker (Brucker, VI, p. 29) and by Kahle: "Lorenz Reinhard, whose *Historiae philosophicae compendium*, Lipsiae 1724, is recommended for its pleasing conciseness and clarity" (Struve, I, p. 161).

There is a certain originality in the division of the material into a historical part and a part based on systems. After describing the whole history of philosophy chronologically, he sets out the philosophical writings according to their various disciplines (metaphysics, logic, natural philosophy, moral philosophy, and political philosophy). In doing so, Reinhard was following a method typical of polyhistorical works, adjusting it to the practice of university teaching, which expected there to be a historical introduction to the particular courses, in addition to lectures of a general

nature (cf. Feldman, "Die Geschichte der Philosophie", p. 182). This same method is found again in Walch (J.G. Walch, *Einleitung in die Philosophie*, Leipzig, 1727); see also J.G. Feder, *Grundriss der philosophischen Wissenschaften* (Coburg, 1769).

7.2.6. On Reinhard's life and works: Jöcher (Erg), VI, cols. 1707–1708; Schmersahl, p. 267; Heinsius, III, cols. 938–939; Gumposch, p. 222; ADB, XXXVIII, pp. 65–66. A review of the *Synopsis philosophiae moralis* in AE, suppl. X, p. 184.

For his history of law: Palladini, *Discussioni seicentesche su S. Pufendorf*, p. 71. The *Compendium* is cited by Feldmann, "Die Geschichte der Philosophie", pp. 177 and 182; Braun, p. 377.

7.3 Joh. Gottlieb Heineccius (1681–1741)

Elementa philosophiae rationalis et moralis

7.3.1. While the historians of philosophy examined so far were mostly theologians or churchmen, Joh. Gottlieb Heineccius was a scholar of law of European reputation. He was born in 1681 in Eisenberg in Thuringia, where he received his early education under the guidance of his father, a teacher at the city's grammar school. Having begun on an ecclesiastical career, he entered the University of Leipzig, where he studied Theology and Philosophy. After graduating in Philosophy (1703), he followed his elder brother Johann Michael, a theologian and pastor, to Halle; there he had the opportunity of attending lectures by Ch. Thomasius and Johann Samuel Stryckius, who directed him to the study of jurisprudence. Before long, he began to give private lessons in law, of which he became temporary professor in 1720 and full professor in 1721. Two years later he moved away from Halle, accepting the invitation of the Dutch University of Franecker, where he remained until 1727. He returned to Germany as professor of Civil Law and Philosophy at Frankfurt, where he was also rector from 1731. At the request of the King of Prussia he returned for good to Halle in 1733, and he died there from an ulcer in 1741.

7.3.2. As confirmation of Heineccius's fame in the context of European culture, there are two complete editions of his works, the first published in Geneva (*Opera omnia nunc denuo edita, multisque accessionibus locupleta*, 9 Vols., Geneva, 1771), the second in Naples (*Operum ad universam iurisprudentiam, philosophiam et litteras humaniores pertinentium tomi X*, Naples, 1753–1777).

His most important works are obviously on legal subjects: for reasons of space we omit here the very numerous academic dissertations, restricting ourselves to more relevant works: *Antiquitatum ius Romanum illustrantium syntagma* (Halle, 1717), published in subsequent years also in Strasburg, Venice, Basel, and Utrecht; *Elementa iuris civilis secundum ordinem Institutionum commoda auditoribus methodo adornata*, written in Franecker and published in Amsterdam in 1725; *Historia iuris civilis Romani et Germanici* (Halle, 1733, republished in 1740 and 1765; ed. H. Kümper, Nordhausen, 2005). The theme of the history of civil law

is taken up again with reference to the Germanic tradition in the *Elementa Iuris Germanici tum veteris tum hodierni* (2 Vols., Halle, 1735–1736). The most important work, in that it gives a theoretical foundation to natural law, is the *Elementa iuris naturae et gentium, commoda Auditoribus methodo adornata* (Halle, 1738; English transl.: *A Methodical System of Universal Law, or, the Laws of Nature and Nations*, eds. Th. Ahnert and P. Schröder, Indianapolis, 2008). This work places the will of God, expressed through the precept of love, as the foundation of natural law; just as the object of love (that is to say, God, ourselves, and others) is threefold, so the source of all our duties will be threefold.

Heineccius was also interested in philosophy and the history of philosophy, beginning with the dissertation: *De verae falsaeque sapientiae characteribus* (Halle, 1713). This piece of writing is significant for the author's readiness to examine what the ancients had believed: indeed it starts from the Socratic definition of wisdom, moving on to Plato's seven definitions taken from the *Sophista*, and finally giving the opinion of Clement of Alexandria. Another book on the subject of the history of philosophy is *De philosophis semichristianis Exercitatio historica et philosophica* (Halle, 1714). After locating the cause of the contamination of philosophy and Christianity in the school of Ammonius Sacca, the author divides semi-Christian philosophers into two groups: in the first group are the more cautious or secret followers of Christian teachings (Epictetus, Plotinus, Porphyry, Jerocles, Iamblichus), in the second the more open followers (Simplicius, Calcidius, Procopius, Sinesius). The most important work is the *Elementa philosophiae rationalis et moralis ex principiis admodum evidentibus justo ordine adornata. Accessere Historia philosophica et Index locupletissimus* (Frankfurt, 1728, 1761^{11}). As appears from the title, the work, read here in the Naples edition of 1774, is divided into three parts: the first, introductory, part, contains a history of philosophy from the beginnings up to modern times (cf. below, para 7.3.4), the second is on logic, and the third on morals. The history of philosophy was published separately, with a commentary that Heineccius used in his academic lectures: Joh. Gottlieb Heineccius, *Anleitung zur Historie der Weltweisheit, aus dessen eigenen Handschrift zum Druck befördert* (Berlin: bey Johann Andreas Rüdiger, 1743).

7.3.3. In the "Praefatio" to the *Elementa philosophiae*, Heineccius developed some interesting ideas on the nature of the history of philosophy. His first way of understanding philosophy, in truth somewhat superficial, shows us a plurality of philosophical systems and methods, each corresponding to the spirit and fashion of a particular historical period: "Nearly every century has its own philosophical method, which for a certain length of time meets the favour of the public and is welcomed and approved by young people, until another philosopher bursts noisily on to the stage" (p. iv). Thus the Scholastics, with their puerile hair-splitting, were dominant for a certain period, then came the time of Cartesianism, very soon to be replaced by the fashion of atomism, and now, states the author, it is the turn of Leibniz's metaphysical speculations and Newton's mathematical philosophy. Hence there is a continual changing of philosophical attitudes, just like fashions in clothes: "Just as sometimes people like long dresses and at other times short, [. . .] in the same way different philosophies are appreciated at different times" (p. iv).

The comparison between fashion in philosophy and fashion in clothes shows very clearly the error of those who dwell on the external aspect of philosophy, no less unpardonable than the attitude of those who dress the Ancients in new clothes to make them seem modern. Philosophy is not, in its essence, a matter of fashion: it does not require continual renewal and change. There is in fact a nucleus that remains constant in every philosophy: "There is only one truth and it can be attained by he who decides to make use of right reason, in the same way as the light of the sun can be seen by a healthy eye. However, like animals when they observe that incomparable light of the universe with eyes closed or open, they all see the sun, as long as they are not blind or do not hide in the bowels of the earth, so those who have once understood that force of the mind we call reason seem to have grasped the truth, although some may have seen it as though through a mist, while others have seen in a clearer way" (p. vi). Since there is only one truth, philosophy is the more or less clear knowlege of a single object, and there is one means to that knowledge for everyone. The differing points of view are inevitably linked to the historical destiny of philosophy: they depend on the rational capacity of each man and on the particular circumstances that are behind every effort to understand the truth.

A deeper understanding of the history of philosophy does not lead us to general scepticism about the effectiveness of philosophy itself, but allows us to learn many truths that the Ancients managed to reach by making good use of their intellectual capabilities: "How joyful to see the agreement on many doctrines and also on truly sublime doctrines? How useful it is to arouse the search for truth and to listen to philosophers who, although they do not possess a true knowledge of God, have spoken in such a reverent and wise way about virtue and about the other moral questions?" (p. vii). In order to obtain this result, the historian has to leave aside the external, transitory, aspect of philosophies and to determine the particular experience of truth proper to each system.

It is clear that the eclectic tendency is at the root of this attitude, that is to say, the acceptance of a philosophical method that considers the contribution of others, together with meditation and personal reflection, to be the basis of authentic philosophizing. Anyone who wishes to be an eclectic cannot ignore the history of philosophy: "And how could it happen that someone who uses the eclectic philosophical method should be completely ignorant of what the philosophers have discovered? And how could someone who substantially ignores what they established and the way they adopted these teachings approach philosophical teachings with the principles of correct reason?" (p. vii). Thus the history of philosophy becomes for Heineccius, as indeed it had become for the authors of the school of Buddeus and Thomasius, a guide for philosophical research itself, and it guarantees authentic freedom of judgement according to the principles of "sound reason".

7.3.4. *Elementa philosophiae rationalis et moralis*

7.3.4.1. The history of philosophy ("Historia philosophica") was published as an introduction to the *Elementa philosophiae rationalis et moralis*. It is divided into four chapters: (1) "De philosophia generatim" (pp. 1–2); (2) "De philosophia traditionaria" (p. 3–7); (3) "De philosophia Graecanica" (pp. 7–20); and (4)

"De philosophia medii aevi et nova" (pp. 21–26). Each chapter consists of short paragraphs, with notes usually referring to the bibliography. At the end of the whole work there is an "Index rerum praecipuarum", in which references to subjects and authors of the history of philosophy are marked by the symbol "H", to distinguish them from references to rational (L) and moral (M) philosophy.

7.3.4.2. The history of philosophy is divided into two main periods: the ancient pre-Christian period and the Christian period. Ancient philosophy is divided into the philosophy of the Barbarians, described as *traditionaria* because it did not make use of reason but was based on tradition; and Greek philosophy. The latter has more internal divisions: "the Poetic is one kind of philosophy, the Italic another; another is the Ionic, yet another the Eleatic" (p. 7). Two other directions are contrasted with these schools: the Sceptics (Pyrrho) distinguished from the Dogmatics, and the Eclectics (Potamon, the Neoplatonists, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen) who opposed the sectarians.

The second period also is divided into two: medieval and modern philosophy. The latter is divided in various ways: (1) the opponents of Aristotle (Valla, Nizolio); (2) the restorers of the ancient schools; (3) the inventors of new systems "but less well known" (Lull, Ramus, Campanella); (4) the representatives of experimental philosophy (Harvey, Galileo, Torricelli); (5) the great systems of Bacon and Descartes; (6) mystico-chemist philosophers (Fludd, Poiret, Böhme); and (7) the reformers of moral and political philosophy (Grotius, Pufendorf, Machiavelli, Milton, Althusius).

7.3.4.3. After defining philosophy as "knowledge of the true and the good, derived from correct reason" (p. 1), Heineccius excludes the possibility of calling philosophy the knowledge of the true and good "which we receive from the ancestors through tradition, we draw from Holy Scripture, or we repeat what some learned person has taught us. Therefore *traditional*, *Scriptural*, and *sectarian* philosophy are excluded, as none of them derives from correct reason" (p. 2). The first chapter of his history of philosophy is instead devoted to the Barbarians. Heineccius here disagrees for the most part with Laertius who "with weak and almost childish arguments", blinded by love of his country, had attributed the Greeks with the honour of having started philosophy. The Barbarians were characterized by the simplicity of their wisdom, which was directed mainly towards moral questions.

With the Greeks a new way of philosophizing began, a way that followed the rules of reason alone: "A greater impetus was given to the study of the history of philosophy by the Greeks, who even though they took some ideas from the Barbarians, deserved praise for having adopted a more accurate philosophical method, since they followed or at least wished to follow correct reason as their only guide" (p. 7). Pythagoras was the first to define philosophy as "the science of beings in so far as they exist" and to divide it into theoretical and practical, but as he used neoplatonic sources, it was easy for Heineccius to accuse Pythagoras of fanaticism.

The Ionic school comprises two stages: an initial phase in which the study of nature was prevalent; and the period that began with Socrates, who gave anthropological questions a central place. Repeating Albinus's interpretation, Heineccius gives a systematic view of Platonic thought divided into logic,

metaphysics, and morals. The beginning of all things is two-fold, matter and God, "who formed all things according to ideas, that is according to the eternal models that exist through nature" (p. 13); the world is presided over by an external spirit, not created by God but acting according to the criteria of divine providence. Among the followers of Plato, the author distinguishes the representatives of the Academy from the more recent Platonists (*Platonici recentiores*), who lived after Christ, among whom, as well as the pagans Plotinus, Amelius, Porphyry, and Proclus, he places a number of Church Father such as Justin, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen. Heineccius considers that the opinion of the Jesuit Baltus exonerating the Fathers from Le Clerc's accusation of Platonism has no foundation: "Mystical theology is constituted from this mixture and from nowhere else" (p. 15).

As for Aristotelian philosophy, Heineccius limits himself to expressing a partially favourable opinion, in polemic with the radical criticisms that had been made against Peripatetic philosophy in the early eighteenth century: "I remind you of this, that today Aristotle is much criticised, particularly by those who do not understand him. They say that his physics is ridiculous and his ethics and logic poor, although they may seem accurate to some; but his politics and his essay on the art of poetry, as well as his rhetoric and the fragments on the history of philosophy and on civil affairs are undoubtedly praiseworthy" (p. 15). Basing his comments on the writings of Laertius in particular, the author makes an effort to present the Stoics without first going back to the accusations of Spinozism and atheism; but he cannot avoid recording the inconsistency into which they fell when they spoke grandly of the divinity, having previously assigned everything to fate. Parallel to this he underlines Epicurus's error in conceiving of happiness as the purpose of philosophical research after having excluded the immortality of the soul and divine providence (p. 19).

After Greek philosophy, Heineccius deals with the Scholastics, omitting the Romans and Patristic thought. The fundamental characteristic of medieval philosophy was Aristotelianism which the Arabs had changed into its most spurious form: "the new chaos of Scholastic philosophy was formed from the Aristotelian system and the Arab system" (p. 21). The battle against Aristotle and the Scholastics, and the search for new systems, characterized the philosophical spirit of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. First place among the *novatores* goes to Descartes, "who, although he did not always grasp the truth exactly, threw off the yoke of philosophical slavery and passed down to posterity many excellent observations" (p. 25). He placed the *cogito* in logic as the criterion of truth, he demonstrated the existence of God "starting from the idea of the most perfect being", and in physics he followed the Copernican system; he was not so successful in moral philosophy as he did not start "from that knowledge of oneself which all wisdom should originate from". Then Heineccius takes a stand against Descartes's supposed Spinozism: "He [viz. Spinoza] did not learn his pantheism from Descartes but drew it from his own sources" (p. 25).

The "Historia philosophica" concludes with an unusual declaration of opposition to the philosophers and their alleged wisdom: "The family of philosophers is very numerous, and just as numerous are the differences between their teachings. And, as many men who are stupid, no lovers of the truth, and shameless, while they

profess wisdom have in reality presented themselves as an example of a useless kind of wisdom, it is not surprising that some [viz. Varro] should have declared that it is difficult for a sick mind to dream of the kind of ungodly things that some philosopher has said" (pp. 26, 509). This radical disparagement of the history of philosophy, allegedly showing infinite examples of false wisdom, is translated into an invitation to eclecticism, to divest oneself of the prejudices of authority and the love of particular schools, and to give up the arrogance of pointless disputes, which historical study has shown to be the ingredients of sectarian philosophy. In this way, knowledge of the past is revealed as an indispensable starting point for undertaking philosophical research in a way that is correct, in other words, eclectic, and not dominated by one school.

7.3.4.4. Heineccius sets himself a number of guiding criteria: "Although I intended to be brief in writing this history, yet I reckoned that I should document all that I have written with genuine sources and note diligently the actual books of the authors and their arguments" ("Praefatio", p. vii). Three aspects of his method can be observed in this programmatic note: first of all, it shows the brevity of the plan proposed, adapted to give basic preliminary information rather than a complete survey of philosophers and their systems. The names of many thinkers are given, each placed in the school to which he belonged; a mention of teachings is restricted to the philosophers considered to be the most important: Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, the Stoics, Epicurus, and Descartes. Despite its schematic nature, the work demands respect for the accuracy of the information recorded and especially for the care with which the sources have been consulted. Unlike many earlier historians who had mixed the testimony of the ancients with the interpretations of the moderns in a somewhat casual manner, Heineccius bases his writing mainly on ancient sources, which he felt to be more genuine and reliable, with particular reference to Diogenes Laertius.

As to the works of the philosophers, despite Heineccius's intention to describe them faithfully, we can find inadequate information and in particular an almost complete lack of references to their contents. For example, on the works of Plato, Heineccius mentions the Paris edition of 1578 but does not record any titles, and for the reconstruction of Plato's teachings he refers to Laertius and Albinus of Smyrna. Another inconsistency can be seen when he does not apply the concept of philosophy, discussed theoretically at the beginning, as the criterion for judging whether or not ancient wisdom was philosophical or not, but makes use instead of the definition of philosophy as "knowledge of the true and the good", and its division into instrumental and practical, as a basic schema for an articulated examination of the teachings of the philosophers.

7.3.5. From the point of view of the contents, Heineccius's history of philosophy does not present any important innovations; most attention is given to the Greek schools and to modern philosophy, but medieval philosophy, despised though it commonly was in the eighteenth century, is not neglected. Following Heumann, pre-Greek thought (*philosophia traditionaria*) is not considered "real" philosophy in that it rejected the freedom of research and was a body of teachings codified and

sanctified by tradition. The account of Eastern thought, despite the negative judgement on its philosophical value, is part of a historical tradition that was by now established and that responded to the taste of contemporaries, as is demonstrated by the review in the *Acta eruditorum* which dwells precisely on this part of the "Historia philosophica" (AE, 1729, p. 416).

The framework of the history of philosophy is not conceived of as an independent work, but serves as an introduction to academic courses on logic and morals, constituting the first part of the *Elementa philosophiae rationalis et moralis*, modelled on the works of Ch. Thomasius and Buddeus, with whom Heineccius also shared his eclectic approach to philosophy. The book enjoyed a relatively wide circulation in Germany, in the German edition, and at the European level in the various editions of Heineccius's *Opera omnia*.

7.3.6. On his life and works: "De fatis et scriptis Jo. G. Heineccii commentarius", in J.G. Heineccius, *Opera* (Naples, 1759), Vol. 1, pp. iii–lv; Schmersahl, pp. 245–246; Jöcher, II, cols. 1452–1453; Heinsius, II, cols. 311–312; ADB, XI, pp. 361–363; NDB, VIII, pp. 296–297; DSPh, III, p. 44.

On the works of Heineccius and his juridical ideas: Chr. Bergfeld, "Pufendorf und Heineccius", in *Samuel Pufendorf und die europäische Frühaufklärung*, eds. F. Palladini and G. Hartung, pp. 225–235; Id., "Staat und Gesetz, Naturrecht und Vertrag bei Grotius und Heineccius", in *Gesellschaftliche Freiheit und Philosophie*, eds. J.-F. Kervegan and H. Mohnhaupt (Frankfurt a.M., 1999), pp. 95–119; K. Luig, "Johann Gottlieb Heineccius als Kritiker des Naturrechts von Hugo Grotius", in *Europa in der frühen Neuzeit. Festschrift für Günter Muhlpfordt*, ed. E. Donnert (Weimar, 1997), Vol. II, pp. 31–42; P. Wardemann, *Johann Gottlieb Heineccius (1681–1741). Leben und Werke* (Frankfurt a.M., 2007).

Review of *Elementa philosophiae* in AE, 1729, pp. 414–416. The work is cited by Struve, I, p. 158; Schmersahl, p. 13; J.A. Ortloff, *Handbuch der Literatur der Geschichte der Philosophie* (Erlangen, 1798), p. 26.

7.4 Adrian Lamezan (1706–1748)

Elementa philosophiae veteris et novae

7.4.1. What marks out Lamezan's history of philosophy is the absence of that Protestant spirit and anti-Catholic polemic that has animated all the works examined so far. The writer defines himself as Juliacensis – a native of the Duchy of Jülich – on the title page of the book; however, it has not been possible to gather enough significant information to recreate a more precise historical and cultural background to his life. The name Adrian Lamezan is unknown both in modern bibliographical works, such as the *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie*, and in the most complete eighteenth-century catalogues such as that of Jöcher; but it has been traced in a genealogical dictionary of the Bavarian nobility (*Genealogisches Handbuch des in Bayern immatrikulierten Adels*, Bd. III, Neustadt-Aisch, 1952, pp. 163–169). The Lamezan family belonged to the ancient nobility of southern France, and one of its

branches move to Germany with Adrian von Lamezan, who died in the Catholic parish of Wassenberg near Aachen in 1729. The description *Juliacensis* is thus appropriate, since Wassenberg did indeed at that time belong to the Duchy of Jülich. There is a mention of a son, also called Adrian Lamezan, who was born in 1706 and died in 1748 after obtaining the title of Imperial vicar on 10th September, 1745. When the *Elementa* was published, Lamezan the younger was only 24, but it is precisely this fact that makes it possible to attribute the work in question to him with some certainty. In the Preface ("Lectori salutem") the author in fact declares that he is young ("my mind is still prone to the passions of adolescence"), and he explains this more clearly, declaring that his work is fragmentary because it has been written in the same number of days as his years: "I applied my soul to write this when I was four and a half lusters old; the number of days taken was almost equal to the number of my years". Thus the date of birth (1706) is decisive in attributing to Adrian Lamezan the history of philosophy that we are about to examine. It has not been possible to gather any other information about his life, but it is interesting to note his adherence to the Catholic faith, in the tradition of his family.

7.4.2. All that we have of Adrian Lamezan is a textbook on the history of philosophy, a juvenile work written for school use: *Elementa philosophiae veteris et novae seu libellus quo brevis historia philosophiae et philosophorum dicta factaque et opiniones continentur*. Authore Adriano Lamezan, Juliacensi (Vienna: apud Jo. Carl Newen., 1730). No other editions of the work are known.

7.4.3. Lamezan limited the range of the history of philosophy to the Greeks; this idea clashed with the historiographical tradition of the early eighteenth century, which had for a long time not only been interested in the Eastern peoples but considered their philosophy to be the indispensable premise to Greek thought, and in some cases superior to it. In order to justify his own choice, however, the author first of all poses the question of the origin of philosophy.

Two apparently contrasting positions intersect in this analysis: on the one hand, the idea of the divine origin of philosophy, which came from the Fathers, and on the other the theory – that of Laertius – that the Greeks were the first philosophers. The problem was resolved by finding a connection between Greek philosophy and Hebrew tradition: the mediators were, for Lamezan, the Egyptians, from whom the Greeks, from Pythagoras to Plato, had taken much: "Philosophy, like all of the other sciences, was poured into Adam by God at the very moment of creation; it disappeared after Adam's sin like a fire half-extinguished in the ashes; later it was reawakened by the activity of men, especially Hermes and then Joseph and Moses; and it is certain that the wisdom of these was more than human; the Greeks perfected it" (p. 8). Philosophy was originally a gift, but in time it had become the laboured acquisition of man; the Egyptians rediscovered it, but it was the Greeks who gave it a complete form: "After receiving from the Egyptians a philosophy that was far from the senses of man and the slave of mere notions, almost like a pearl enclosed in a shell, they brought it back into the light and turned it in the direction of usefulness for man" (p. 4). The Greeks represented a radical turning point for philosophy, as is

demonstrated by their distinction between theory and practice, which philosophical thinking was to maintain throughout its history.

Although Lamezan did not start with a rigorous definition of philosophy, like Heumann had done, he shared the same point of view: philosophy did actually begin with the Greeks. He came to this conclusion thanks more to practical and didactic considerations than theoretical ones. His book was, in fact, a textbook to be used by students as a starting point for the study of philosophy; and the philosophy usually taught at universities was Greek, or at least, derived from the Greek tradition.

7.4.4. *Elementa philosophiae veteris et novae*

7.4.4.1. The text has a two-page Preface ("Lectori salutem"), and is divided into various sections, not numbered, with corresponding headings. Although not divided into parts and chapters, it is sufficiently well-organized. Two introductory paragraphs on the origin and purpose of philosophy ("De origine philosophiae", pp. 1–8; "De fine philosophiae", pp. 8–11), are followed by various sections on the history of the Greek schools (pp. 11–89) and their respective teachings (pp. 88–159). Next, there is a section on medieval and modern philosophy, concluding with the teachings of Fludd and Descartes. There are no indices. In all, the work has 208 octavo pages; the page numbers are not strictly consecutive, and p. 156 it goes back to p. 101. To avoid confusion, we shall mark the pages that are repeated as follows: [bis]).

7.4.4.2. The history of philosophy is divided into three periods: Greek, Roman, and Christian philosophy. When distinguishing between the various phases of Greek thinking, Lamezan shows some independence from other historians: the period of the Seven Wise Men is followed by that of the schools, the oldest of which are still considered to be the Italic (Pythagoras) and Ionic (Thales). While the former remained faithful to the teachings of their master, the latter founded many schools: Academic, Peripatetic, Cynic, Stoic, Epicurean and Theodorean or atheist. The absence of the Eleatic school is noticeable; its members are placed in a third branch of philosophy consisting of the Eclectics, which contains both the authentic disciples of Socrates (Aristippus, Xenophon, Phaedo) and the independent philosophers who based their teaching solely on their own intelligence (Heraclitus, Xenophanes, Empedocles, Parmenides, Melissus, Zeno, Leucippus, Democritus).

In the Roman era, Greek philosophy also spread among the Latins, but the greatest philosophers still came from the East, from the two schools of Athens and Alexandria (Ptolemy, Galen, Ammonius, Plotinus, Proclus, Iamblichus, Themistius).

The third period includes both medieval and modern philosophy under the banner of "progressus philosophiae". Progress was made gradually: Charlemagne's reform was not sufficient ("An old wound is slow to heal"); the Scholastics, on the other hand, represented a period of effective growth. In a later period, the Greek schools were revived, but other philosophers followed new paths: the Chemists (Paracelsus, Fludd) wanted to take their teachings "from the bosom of nature" and Descartes understood philosophy in a way that was different from that of the ancients.

The originality of Lamezan's periodization should be emphasized, even though it includes some schemas taken from historiographical tradition. He adds to the two branches of the Ionics and the Italics a third consisting of the Eclectics; they are not traced back to Potamon and placed in the Roman period, but are studied in parallel with the development of classical Greek thought. The placing of Eleatism among the Eclectics leads to a different placing of the Epicurean school, which is put in the Ionic current, between the Stoics and the atheists (followers of Theodorus). But what was most important and new for the eighteenth century was the idea of a continuity between the Middle Ages and the modern era, presupposing the gradual progress of philosophy, an approach that was however already present in Villemandy (cf. above, Chapter 1, para 1.4.4.2).

7.4.4.3. While earlier historians had started from the wisdom of the ancient poets, Lamezan rejects their absurd fantasies wholesale: "The poets devised all kind of foul pictures of the Gods, but they did not eliminate evil nor did they wipe out the weakness of the human condition" (p. 89). The fundamental difference between poetry and philosophy, for Lamezan, lies precisely in their concept of the divinity. Following an opinion typical of the Church Fathers, he states that most pagan philosophers, and Plato at the head of them all, were able to grasp the principle of the oneness of God, rejecting the polytheism of official religion which was, on the other hand, supported by the poets. On this basis, Lamezan then divides the schools into two groups: on one hand, the good ones, which acknowledged God, on the other the bad ones who denied him. The first (Pythagoreans, Ionics, Academics, Cynics, Peripatetics) sometimes made mistakes but only because of human weakness; the second (Theodoreans, Epicureans, Pyrrhonians, Sophists) deliberately erred at the point where the teaching was the clearest because of divine revelation, which was known to the Greeks through Moses and the Egyptians: "Although we do not absolve any of the sects of error, yet it seems appropriate to distinguish the followers of some sects, who were led into error by human weakness, from the followers of sects who fell into error because of the wickedness of their own intelligence" (p. 89).

The first Greek philosopher was Pythagoras, who taught the theory of numbers, as exemplary models through which God created the universe, and the immortality of the soul. On the other hand, Thales, the founder of the Ionic way, was the first to investigate the secrets of nature. Subsequently, all the other schools, including the Platonic and the Aristotelian, descended from the Ionics. Plato not only recognized God as a non-corporeal being, but also saw him as the providence which governs the world; in some way he sensed the Trinitarian nature of God: "It appears that for the Platonists there were three principles of things: God (who is called cause, mind, or goodness), idea, and matter. Relating to the first of these principles are God, his son the Intellect who emanates from the paternal light like a lamp, and finally the soul of the world, [which emanates] from the divine intellect like a spirit which spreads through every thing. By arguing in this way one can say that they gained knowledge of the most holy Trinity" (p. 109). As we see, Lamezan does not make a distinction between Plato and the Platonists and accepts the Patristic interpretation of Platonism.

Basing his assertion on the *De Mundo*, which in the early eighteenth century was still attributed to Aristotle, Lamezan defends the Stagirite's concept of God: "His divine providence extends to the smallest things; like the helmsman to the ship, like the charioteer to the chariot, like the laws to the city, or the commander to the army, so is God to the world" (p. 112). On the other hand, Lamezan expresses a negative opinion of Peripatetic ethics, which he compares to the ethics of the Epicureans because of the link that he perceived between virtue and pleasure; he sees an even closer link between the two philosophies on other important doctrines: the denial of the immortality of the soul and the immutability of the principles of things (pp. 127–129). Unlike the Platonist system, the Aristotelian system is still regarded as dangerous and irreconcilable with Christianity.

The Eleatic philosophers are no longer considered as the initiators of the philosophical movement that was to descend, by way of Democritus's atomism, to Epicureanism. Lamezan maintains that Epicurus had come to science by means of his own intelligence ("Primus Graius homo", Lucretius); he would not in any case have been able to arrive at it from the Eleatics, because of the diversity and contradiction in their opinions, which were, if anything, inclined toward scepticism: "As far as I can judge, one cannot say that the teaching of Epicurus derives from that of the Eleatics. In fact, there were as many opinions in the Eleatic school as there were heads, as Cicero declared. It seems that the purpose of all the Eleatics was to eliminate the certainty of judgement on natural things, and to doubt everything" (p. 158).

It is interesting to underline the place given to Scholastic philosophy, which the author, showing here too his independence with regard to the historiographical schemas in use at the time, seems to have appreciated, even if he does not set out their teachings but restricts himself to presenting the main philosophers. Modern philosophy is no longer conceived of as a revolt against Scholasticism, but appears as an effort of reconstruction, which began in the West as early as the high Middle Ages after the disappearance of ancient philosophical culture. From the period of the Longobards, in which "the very name of philosophy seemed almost forgotten and overlooked" (p. 139[bis]), we see a slow but steady growth, and philosophy achieved perceptible results as early as the thirteenth century: "Eventually in the 13th century, some people appeared who applied themselves to dispelling barbarism, removing the wretchedness from the face of philosophy to make it radiant, and taking away the rust of ages. Vincent of Beauvais in France, and Peter Lombard, the *magister sententiarum*, who gave philosophy the order still seen today in the schools, Albertus Magnus in Germany, Alexander of Hales, St Bonaventure and St Thomas Aquinas in Italy, Duns Scotus in Great Britain: we call all of these learned men *magni, irrefragabiles, seraphici, angelici, subtiles* [...]. As time passed, some of the ancient philosophical sects were restored, after, however, superstition had been given up, or, with a correct interpretation, suiting them to the character of our faith as far as is possible for pagan teachings" (p. 140[bis]). The links between Scholasticism and modern philosophy are not examined in further detail, but we can note Lamezan's positive portraits of the Scholastics, and the absence of a break with the Renaissance which, as has been mentioned, was characterized by the recovery of the ancient Greek schools. Lamezan indeed

does not consider this to be in opposition to Scholastic philosophy, but rather a continuation of it.

Among modern philosophers Lamezan only examines the teachings of the Chemists and Descartes, in both cases showing little sympathy for them. He does not mention the *cogito* or Cartesian metaphysics at all, and instead underlines those aspects of physics which might resemble ancient Greek thought (Anaxagoras). Even though he covers the entire history of philosophy, as the title itself tells us (*Elementa philosophiae veteris et novae*), Lamezan's interest is almost exclusively concentrated on classical Greek thought.

7.4.4.4. A certain style of exposition had become established in German philosophical historiography ever since the theorizing of Heumann and Gentzken, and Lamezan certainly had this tradition in mind when he separated the description of the schools from his treatment of their teachings. In the first part of his book he follows the chronological sequence of the schools (pp. 13–88), and here his effort to achieve the utmost clarity and to place each thinker in his own school is noteworthy. Where the most important schools are concerned, he also provides summaries with the names of the most famous representatives and followers (Academics, Peripatetics, Cynics, Stoics, Epicureans). The bibliographical details, taken mostly from Laertius, Cicero, Gellius, and Plutarch, concentrate on the character of the philosophers and on their sayings.

Greater space is given to the "opinions" of the philosophers, explained according to the order of the schools and organized round the three focal points of each system: theology, cosmology, and ethics – "at the centre of these we shall put their opinions on God, on the nature of things and on the purpose of man, since the whole of philosophy turns on them" (p. 88). The work's didactic function is expressed here in particular. The historian's aim is to clarify the most godly and most truthful doctrines, but at the same time to expose the false and dangerous; indeed the error of one philosophy throws into relief the beauty and dignity of the others, just as shadow shows up the light: "in the same way I reckon that we shall be able to pursue the best kind of philosophy if we have also learnt the worst opinions. I believe that there is no way in which one can better demonstrate the beauty and excellence of one philosophy than through the dishonouring of another. I shall be able to grasp the beauty of the doctrines of the Ionic, Academic, Cynic, and Peripatetic schools if I compare them with the errors and lack of order of the Epicurean, Theodorean, Pyrrhonian, and Sophist sects" (pp. 88–89).

The account of the "good" philosophies is more objective and detached. Lamezan the historian does not comment directly but explains the various theories with quotations from the works of the philosophers and from ancient sources. For example, on the Platonic concept of the soul: "The soul is a substance provided with a mind, mobile through its own virtue, and which moves harmoniously (Plutarch, *De plac. Phil.*). As it is not generated it is not mortal, and it is ungenerated in that it moves of itself (Plat., *Phaedrus*). The soul is divided into three parts according to the rational, irascible, and concupiscible faculties" (p. 108). Although the philosophers' statements may not appear altogether justified on a logical level, he integrates them by reporting the reasoning by which they arrived at a particular thesis. And to do this,

Lamezan uses syllogisms, as in the case of Thales: "Water is the element through which all things are generated by God [. . .]. This doctrine of Thales' is based on the following syllogism: that from which anything is propagated is that from which a thing is born; but things are propagated through water; therefore they are born from water" (p. 93).

Implicit in this procedure is a way of perceiving hermeneutics typical of the eighteenth century: it is the art that leads us to an understanding of the ancient texts even when they seem incomplete and obscure. To interpret Thales by means of a syllogism does not lead to a distortion of the philosopher's real intentions; it does not make him say more than he actually said, but it allows us to understand his position more thoroughly by pointing out all its implications and consequences. Furthermore, this process finds another, more immediate, justification on a didactic level: only by means of a syllogism can the young student manage to grasp the real significance and value of Thales' statement, which might at first sight seem banal and without foundation.

7.4.5. Lamezan's textbook was briefly mentioned in a note in the *Bibliotheca philosophica Struviana* (Struve, I, p. 158), but for the most part it passed into obscurity. Brucker did not express any opinion on the merit of the work; and for his part, Lamezan avoided any references to modern histories of philosophy predating his own. This was not only because the book concerned was a juvenile work, fragmentary and at some points imprecise, but it can also be ascribed to his independence and his position outside the Reformed cultural world in which the early eighteenth-century German histories of philosophy were placed.

This aspect appears clearly in his favourable opinion of Scholasticism, which in his work is not seen as a dark age separating classical thought from the recovery of philosophy in the modern era, but as a moment of philosophical awakening that continued during the Renaissance. Apart from this reference to the philosophy closer to his own time, Lamezan's work was concerned almost exclusively with Ancient Greece and Rome. We should finally note the method of dealing with the history of the philosophical schools separately from an analysis of what they taught, which is similar to that used by Gentzken.

7.4.6. On Lamezan's life: *Genealogisches Handbuch des in Bayern immatriculierten Adels*, Vol. III (Neutstadt-Aisch, 1952), pp. 163–169; J.B. Rietstap, *Armorial général, précedé d'un dictionnaire des termes du Blason* (Gouda, 1887; facs. repr. Berlin, 1934), Vol. II, p. 12.

The work is mentioned by: Struve, I, p. 158; Brucker, VI, p. 30; Heinsius, II, col. 361; Ortloff, *Handbuch der Literatur*, p. 25.

7.5 Karl Gerhard Wilhelm Lodtmann (1720–1755)

Kurzer Abriss des Geschichte der Weltweisheit

7.5.1. Karl G. W. Lodtmann belonged to a generation of historians of philosophy that followed Gentzken and Heineccius, not only in his dates of birth and death,

but because he came after Brucker. He was born in 1720 in the small episcopal principality of Osnabrück, and after studying law at Marburg and Göttingen he returned to his native town to practise as a lawyer. He obtained the degree of doctor of Jurisprudence at the University of Harderwijk in Holland in 1749, and soon afterwards was appointed professor of Philosophy at Helmstadt and assistant in the faculty of Law. He died while still a young man in 1755.

7.5.2. The subject of most of his writings, as of Justus Möser's famous *Osnabrückische Geschichte* (1768), was the history and laws of Osnabrück: *Positiones ex iure marcali in Episcopatu Osnabrugensi* (Harderwijk, 1749); *De origine iudiciorum vemicorum* (Helmstadt, 1751); *Monumenta Osnabrugiensia, ex historia Romana, Francica, Saxonica eruta, notis illustrata* (Helmstadt, 1753); *Zeitrechnung der Bischöffe zu Osnabrück, von Arnold auf Conrad der 2ten, das ist: von 1181 bis 1275 (*Helmstadt, 1752); *Delineatio iuris Osnabrugensis* (Osnabrück, 1767, posthumous); *Commentatio de divisione personarum secundum consuetudines Osnabrugenses* (Osnabrück, 1768, posthumous).

Among his philosophical works are three dissertations published in 1754 on subjects connected with logic and theology: *Diss. philosophica de principio contradictionis*; *De cognitione humana eiusque emendatione*; *De pugna analogorum modorum cum unicitate determinabilitatis in Deo*. Lodtmann compiled a textbook on the history of philosophy specially for his academic lectures: *Kurzer Abriss der Geschichte der Weltweisheit, nach der Ordnung der Zeiten, zum Gebrauch akademischer Vorlesungen* (Helmstadt, 1754). Among his many unpublished writings, some on philosophical subjects, one work remains: *Eine Rede, worin die Einkehrung der Seele in sich selbst beurtheilt wird*.

7.5.3. Ten years after the publication of the *Historia critica*, Lodtmann's *Kurtzer Abriss* summarized the results of Brucker's work, using German to make it easier to use in teaching. The historical framework appears to be identical, describing the search for progress achieved by the human spirit, from man's origins up to the author's time, with attention given almost exclusively to the discoveries that had made such progress possible in every age.

What marks out Lodtmann's work is his method of proceeding by chronological order and his consequent rejection of Laertius's model of history according to philosophical schools. Brucker's idea of the importance of *circumstantiae* in the formation of philosophical systems certainly had an influence on this choice: in every century, philosophical inquiry manifests common characteristics, something that is not noticed if we divide philosophy into schools: "Those who study the history of philosophy with the aid of a textbook that follows a chronological order can understand the times in which each philosopher lived better and more precisely. This is useful in many ways: it makes it easier to understand how learned men make use of the ideas of their predecessors or how they can profit from them; many things become easier and more comprehensible, etc. These reasons have led me to abandon the order of the schools and to narrate the history [of philosophy] only according to time and the centuries" (*Kurzer Abriss*, "Vorrede").

Lodtmann also emphasizes the usefulness of the history of philosophy, which he sees as something different from the history of philosophers and, moreover, as general history (*allgemeine Geschichte*) which should remind the reader of the whole of philosophy and not only one part or school or dogma. It tells us about the ideas taught by the wisest people of every period and so shows us how to seek the truth in a better way ("Vorbericht", p. 2). It helps us to understand the writings of the ancient philosophers and in particular it emphasizes the importance that the discovery of new truths has always had: "It shows how those who have enriched mankind with inventions have reached new truths, and how they, and those who have extended truth, have been rewarded, and moreover how ancient ideas, arranged and clothed in a different way have been passed off as inventions" (p. 2). In this context philosophy is seen as a determining factor in the progress of civilization because of the contribution it makes to the growth of the human patrimony of truth; hence the importance of the history of philosophy through its function as a stimulus to this research.

7.5.4. *Kurzer Abriss der Geschichte der Weltweisheit*

7.5.4.1. The book, which is preceded by a Preface ("Vorrede"), an Index ("Inhalt") and an introductory essay ("Vorbericht"), consists of three parts: 1. "Die alte Geschichte der Weltweisheit", pp. 4–93; 2. "Die mittlere Geschichte der Weltweisheit", pp. 94–117; 3. "Die neue Geschichte der Weltweisheit", pp. 118–172. The first part is further divided into two chapters, Barbarian and Greek philosophy, and the first of these into three sections (i.e. Asiatic, African, and European peoples). Beginning with Greek philosophy the division is made on the basis of centuries, one section for each century up to 1400, and one for every fifty years to 1750. At the end of the book there are two other indices, of names ("Register der Personen", 17 pages), and schools ("Register der Secten", 2 pages). The whole book is further divided into numbered points, up to 281. There are two plates, the first illustrating the symbology of the Chinese, taken from the book *He-Kim*, known in Europe through Couplet's *Scientia Sinica*, while the second shows the derivation of the Greek schools and their respective members, following the Laertian framework.

7.5.4.2. The division into periods is perhaps the most interesting aspect of this work. For the first time the division and derivation of the schools, which had originated in ancient doxography, is abandoned completely and the historiographical material is arranged chronologically in order to obtain, as we have seen, a more accurate understanding of the time in which each philosopher lived.

The division of philosophy into three periods – ancient, medieval, and modern – is maintained, articulated by the two historical events, the fall of the Roman Empire in the West and in the East. The most ancient period is divided into Barbarian and Greek philosophy, the former being the "source" of the latter. While the philosophy of the Eastern peoples is treated according to the different peoples, Greek philosophy is arranged in rigorously chronological order. In the sixth century B.C. lived the earliest philosophers: the Seven Wise Men and Thales, Anaximander,

Aesop, Pherecydes, Pythagoras, and Xenophanes. Each thinker is placed within the appropriate century, according to the method made famous by the *Centuriatores* of Magdeburg: Parmenides, Democritus, Anaxagoras, and Socrates in the fifth century B.C., Plato, Pyrrho, and Aristotle in the 4th, Zeno the Stoic and Epicurus in the 3rd, and so on. For medieval and modern philosophy chronological order is also followed, but after 1400 the division is based on fifty-year periods. Thus Descartes is put near Bacon, Galileo, Kepler, Campanella, and Hobbes, while Leibniz is discussed with Comenius, Malebranche, Spinoza, Pufendorf, and Newton. The work goes right up to Lodtmann's contemporaries, concluding with Ch. Wolff, La Mettrie, and Berkeley.

7.5.4.3. The Eastern peoples are dealt with first of all, following the historiographical tradition also used by Brucker; among them, a prominent place is assigned to the Chinese, "the earliest people to have applied themselves to philosophy" (p. 9). Lodtmann recognizes a closer relationship between Greek philosophy and modern philosophy (*die Griechen sind die Väter unserer jetzigen Weltweisheit*: p. 21), but at the same time he affirms the dependence of the Greeks on the barbarian peoples, especially on the Egyptians: "In the earliest times the Greeks learnt from the Egyptians nearly all of those arts and sciences for which up to the present they have won the admiration of the whole world" (pp. 17–18). The great period of philosophy began with Thales, "the first to make an effort to understand philosophy with a coherent method" (p. 24) and continued with Pythagoras, famous for his mathematical discoveries, with Democritus the founder of atomism, and with Socrates who taught the moral and political theories that the Ionics had neglected.

Lodtmann's opinion of Plato closely recalls the *Historia critica*: "In his writings one finds great eloquence and profound insight but also here and there much obscurity" (p. 40). Platonic teachings were different from those of the Academy: anamnesis, the origin of the world from God and from matter, ideas as the models of things, and the immortality of the soul. Straight after Plato and before Aristotle, the author speaks of Pyrrho, whose doubt had an ethical connotation above all: "only the sceptic is capable of happiness, because if one judges a thing to be good or bad one falls into apprehension (*in Unruhe*)" (p. 44).

Lodtmann continues with the reappraisal of Aristotle that had started, in the context of historiography, with Heumann: "He was a hard-working and intelligent man; an accurate power of judgement and great erudition shine from his writings. He was the first to expound all of philosophy in a coherent way; he reorganised the doctrines of principles, predicaments and syllogism, and of the three figures, of false syllogism and many other things" (pp. 45–46). But the anti-metaphysical prejudice remains: the books under this name are "the worst (*die schwerste*) of his writings".

Plenty of space is given to the Stoic and Epicurean systems, especially the latter: Lodtmann illustrates its teaching on physics but more particularly its ethics, giving an effective account of the model of the wise man: "The wise man endures injustice, he does not ignore wisdom; he always dwells on truth and does not write poetry; he is happy even when suffering torture; he does not fall in love, nor does he consider

love as something divine; he does not go in search of sophisticated eloquence; he avoids carnal pleasure (which is never useful and which is to be enjoyed only if it does not cause harm); he does not live like a cynic [. . .]; he does indeed write books, but no panegyrics or poetry; he looks after his family property but without the desire to become rich; he makes an effort to obtain a good name so that he is not despised; he rejoices if someone becomes better; he teaches others but not just anyone; and if circumstances demand, he dies for his friends" (p. 59).

The author's presentation of philosophy in the Roman period is of some interest, not so much for the presence of original speculation among the Latins as for the appearance in the Greek world of two new currents of thought in the third century: Eclecticism and Neoplatonism. He emphasizes the importance of the Neoplatonists, whose name first appeared in German (*neue Platoniker*) translating Vossius' term *Platonici iuniores*. The founder was Ammonius Saccas who had declared that "Aristotle, Zeno, Pythagoras and the other Greek and Oriental philosophers were no different from Plato in their teachings but only in their words and their way of expressing themselves" (p. 81). On the subject of Plotinus, the author repeated the opinion, previously expressed on Plato, that he was obscure (*seine Schriften sehr dunkel sind*: p. 82), with the additional criticism that he gave too much space to fantasy, claiming that he could see God.

Lodtmann's interpretation of the Middle Ages follows Brucker's line: a strong condemnation of Scholasticism for its pointless arguments and its exclusive love for Aristotle. "These philosophers are called Scholastics, and in the Middle Ages the word, which came from Schola or university, indicated a university teacher. Their philosophy was very subtle; it was concerned with all kinds of difficult and sometimes useless questions and disputes (*Streitigkeiten*) and took its ideas only from the writings of Aristotle which the Scholastics frequently did not understand properly" (p. 106). A more positive judgement is made, as in Buddeus, on those who dedicated themselves to natural research, Albertus Magnus and Roger Bacon, to whom Lodtmann added Petrarch, who after giving up the Scholastic method tried to make philosophy, and particularly ethics, more understandable and useful (p. 116).

The end of the Eastern Empire, with the consequent arrival in Italy of learned Greeks, and the invention of printing, brought about a new philosophical climate, which rejected Scholasticism and looked for a new method that initially turned towards Antiquity. In the seventeenth century a completely new phase began in philosophical speculation; in this period most progress was made by physical science, which was no longer a slave of the past but was capable of advancing independently: "The 17th century was notably different from previous centuries because philosophy began to develop through observation and experiments (*durch Beobachtungen und Erfahrungen*) without however rejecting the discoveries and writings of the ancients" (p. 129). For this purpose scientific societies were promoted; new inventions and the joining of mathematics with physics also contributed to the progress of science, "therefore the knowledge of nature became mathematical and acquired the greatest possible accuracy and reliability" (p. 151). It was in this context that the scientists emerged: Kepler, Galileo, and Newton; the contribution to

science is emphasized particularly in the philosophical systems of Francis Bacon, Descartes, and Leibniz.

Of contemporary philosophers Lodtmann gives prominence to Wolff: "He presented philosophy in a form unknown until then; he demonstrated everything in a systematic way with explanations and unchallengeable experiments. Although he had accepted most of Leibniz's principles, he was the first to join them together and with these results he translated them into German and enriched them with many additions" (p. 164). Finally, we can note the greater detachment with which Lodtmann regards Spinoza; he no longer speaks specifically of atheism and reassesses his moral character: "In general he lived very quietly, in a simple and honest way, and he was opposed to any sort of greed and arrogance" (p. 146). Having given up the invective against Spinoza, it is now possible to arrive at a more objective judgement of his system.

7.5.4.4. Lodtmann's textbook made no claim to be complete and exhaustive; its purpose was to bring together only the most important things, related in few words (*mit wenig Worten*). The original project envisaged a history of philosophy of a special type, which would essentially be a history of the discoveries and progress made in every field of learning; but the difficulty of obtaining accurate information on the discoveries of the ancients persuaded the author "not to move too far from the path followed up to that time by writers on the history of philosophy" ("Vorrede"). However, Lodtmann's interest in discoveries remains alive and can be clearly seen in his description of modern philosophy, in which much space is given to the scientists and, among them, Newton: "with geometrical foundations he showed that the force of attraction or gravity (*gravitas, vis centripeta*) and centrifugal force can cause the celestial bodies to move in ellipsis, according to the law discovered by Kepler; he demonstrated that light consists of rays of different colours which can be separated with a triangular glass prism. With these two discoveries a new path was opened in natural science and this led the way to many other discoveries" (pp. 152–153).

Lodtmann's division of his material by centuries gives a greater coherence to the general historical framework. Each century is introduced by a paragraph illustrating its historical and cultural situation, within which the philosophical debate is placed. Teachings traditionally considered to belong to a single centre of thought are thus studied in the diversity of their historical location. Platonism, as we have seen, is clearly separated from the history of both the Academy and Neoplatonism. Moreover, there is an emphasis on the contribution to the development of philosophy of certain historical factors, such as the favourable attitude of political authority, and the birth of the academies. This connection is sometimes mentioned in describing the ideas of individual writers: "Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury rejected the teachings of Aristotle and wanted to produce a completely new system; the troubles through which he lived in England probably had a significant influence on his thinking" (p. 139).

A paragraph describing the life and personality of each philosopher is followed by an account of his teachings on various points, according to the importance of

the author. The controversy on atheism and Spinozism is almost ignored, in contrast to previous histories of philosophy; instead, there is great interest in the contribution of each philosopher in the field of inventions and discoveries; therefore, when their ideas are discussed, the greatest space is given over to physics and cosmology, as in the description of Cartesian philosophy where a few lines on doubt contrast with a long account of his theory of physics (pp. 137–139). Rather than giving a complete analysis of the systems, Lodtmann offers references to the salient points of their theories, enabling the teacher to start from these and extend his discussion on the philosophy of the various authors. Brucker's writings are quite often cited, but the bibliographical references are very few, because the work was destined for educational use.

7.5.5. The book, which appeared in 1754, shows traces of the influence of Enlightenment ideas, in particular Wolff's rationalism and, on the historiographical level, Brucker's concept of the history of philosophy. Thus Lodtmann's textbook, compared with the others examined so far, is characterized by a more decisive affirmation of faith in reason and by its acceptance of the idea of progress applied to the history of philosophy (*Fortgang und Wachsthum der Weltweisheit*: p. 22) which Brucker had described, as will be seen in the next chapter, as *historia intellectus humani*. The historiographical method itself reflects this point of view. The abandonment of the traditional division into schools, substituted by a rigorous chronological sequence by centuries, had the aim, not only of obtaining a better knowledge of the historical background of each philosopher, but also of assessing more accurately the progress of science and philosophy, which reached its peak in the modern period. The history of this progress is measured by the history of the discoveries and inventions which have contributed towards increasing the cultural inheritance of humanity. Precisely for this reason Newton is given a very prominent place in modern philosophy.

7.5.6. On Lodtmann's life and work: Joh. Gerhard, *Wilh. Lodtmanns Genealogie Tabellen einiger Osnabrüggischen Familien* (Osnabrück, 1769); J.G. Meusel, *Lexikon der vom Jahr 1750 bis 1800 verstorbenen teutschen Schriftsteller* (Leipzig, 1802–1816; facs. repr., Hildesheim, 1967–1968), Vol. VIII, pp. 313–315; Jöcher (Erg), III, Col. 2022; Heinsius, II, Col. 837; ADB, LII, p. 56.

The *Kurzer Abriss* is mentioned by Braun, p. 379.

Chapter 8
A "Critical" History of Philosophy and the Early Enlightenment: Johann Jacob Brucker

Mario Longo

Introduction

Johann Jakob Brucker was not only the most prolific writer on the history of philosophy in Germany up to the middle of the eighteenth century, but it was he above all who understood how best to respond in his writings to the demands that the philosophical culture of the time was making of the historian of philosophy. The notion of eclecticism, which he inherited from the Thomasian current and which was originally a tool of philosophical argument against Aristotelian Scholasticism, was transformed into a historical notion of much greater importance, providing a technique for reading the past of philosophy that rendered it topical and placed it at the centre of philosophical debate. The eclectic is not indifferent when confronted with any manifestation of thought, even if it is very far from the spirit of his time, since he wishes to know about the sources and the possibilities of error, and to free the field of research from the prejudices and obstacles that have so far impeded the attainment of truth. The history of philosophy also shows the progress that man has made on this path, described as a progress out of the darkness of the sects and into the light of eclecticism, and marked by a gradual and increasingly secure recognition of the limitations and capabilities of human reason.

Brucker's historiography, so close to Enlightenment themes that it became the main source for articles on the history of philosophy in the *Encyclopédie*, represents the development and maturity of that historical study that was inspired by the school of Buddeus and Heumann's *Acta philosophorum*: from them Brucker acquired the same taste for historical research and sharpened his methodology. The history of philosophy corresponds to a precise formative and didactic programme: it trains the critical spirit, frees the mind from prejudices, introduces the mind to an understanding of philosophical questions, and in so far as philosophy is in its turn a preparatory course for "higher" disciplines, it also constitutes the basic culture

M. Longo (✉)
Università di Verona, Dipartimento di Filosofia, Pedagogia e Psicologia, Lungadige Porta Vittoria 17, 37132 Verona, Italy
e-mail: mario.longo@univr.it

G. Piaia, G. Santinello (eds.), *Models of the History of Philosophy*, International Archives of the History of Ideas, Archives internationales d'histoire des idées,
DOI 10.1007/978-90-481-9507-7_8, © Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2011

for students of law, medicine, and theology. In Brucker, as in Buddeus, the main point of reference is theological: the history of philosophy leads to the discovery of the source of heresy, provides ways of fighting against atheism, demonstrates the errors of Spinozism, and rigorously marks out the boundaries of philosophy's field of inquiry, different from that of theology, but, by pointing out the errors and contradictions into which the greatest philosophers have fallen, it offers a historical proof of the limits of human reason and of the need to appeal to Revelation. The apologetic commitment, the defence of Christianity against the atheists, and the Lutheran confession against the Catholics, is mitigated by adopting a rigorous historiographical methodology aimed at respect for pure historical truth. The "historical" value of Brucker's work was recognised unanimously by his contemporaries, and this explains the wide circulation of the *Historia critica philosophiae*, which was read, translated, and imitated by people belonging to the most diverse cultural circles, from the Encyclopaedists to Formey, and the Jesuits of the *Mémoires de Trevoux*, to mention only those who wrote in French.

Brucker's method was modelled on the "De fide historica" chapter of Heumann's "Einleitung zur historia philosophica" (cf. above, Chapter 6, para 6.2.9), which translated Bayle's procedure into methodological rules and assigned the historian of philosophy with the task of freeing his history from uncertainty, from fables, and from the errors with which it had been handed down. Thus the first stage of research consists of work on documents, the orderly and complete collection of sources, followed by an analysis of their authenticity and the accuracy of their references. When comparing the various testimonies, certain canonical authorities, such as writings of the Church Fathers on ancient philosophy, are to be discussed and used with some caution after first identifying the theoretical presuppositions and polemical intentions of the authors.

Heumann had given various examples of historical criticism applied to the history of philosophy, demonstrating for example the inauthentic nature of the letters attributed to Democritus, but he had not tackled the reconstruction of doctrines systematically in the *Acta philosophorum*, merely making the general observation that their foundations (*Gründe*) should be recognised and understood, and insisting that for this task the historian of philosophy had to be a philosopher. The "philosophical" history of philosophy which Heumann merely enunciated was expressly put into effect by Brucker. The search for the foundations (*rationes*) of a philosophical system is carried out in two ways: through the study of historical circumstances (*circumstantiae*) one tries to grasp the spirit that animated each philosopher, the *ratio philosophandi* chosen by the individual thinker; this is followed by the logico-systematic composition of the teachings ("the whole system should be rearranged"), divided into theses arranged according to the formal development of the system, from the more general axioms to the propositions that follow from them. Philosophical criticism can at last be used in relation to these teachings, understood thus in the principles that inspire them. Criticism uncovers the weak points, the errors, but picks out the partial truths from which it is possible to proceed by means of personal explorations and research, following the method of eclectic philosophy.

Although they did not share the approach or many of the conclusions of the *Historia critica*, Brucker's immediate successors (Tennemann, Buhle, Cousin, and Degérando) recognized the value of the work he had carried out in the systematizing all the sources on the history of philosophy according to the frameworks and within the limits of the philosophy of his time. His was a work that, as Tennemann was to say, marked a new epoch and remained up to date at least until the age of Kant.

8.1 Johann Jakob Brucker (1696–1770)

Historia philosophica doctrinae de ideis
Kurtze Fragen aus der philosophischen Historie
Auszug aus den Kurtzen Fragen
Historia critica philosophiae
Institutiones historiae philosophicae

8.1.1. Johann Jakob Brucker was born in Augsburg in Bavaria to a poor family on 22nd January, 1696. He had the good fortune to obtain the protection of Philipp Jakob Crophius, from 1704 to 1742 rector of the ancient grammar school of St Anna in Augsburg, who found Brucker a place at the evangelical college enabling him to attend the grammar school classes (1709–1715). Crophius was a humanist of the old type who led his pupils through rigorous readings of the Latin writers to reach the ideal of *pietas atque eloquentia*.

After completing his school studies, Brucker was able to enter the faculties of Philosophy and Theology of the University of Jena, where he remained until 1720. It was here that he met Johann Franz Buddeus, professor of Theology and principal exponent of a line of thinking that sought, on a religious level, to reconcile Pietism and Lutheran orthodoxy and to overcome the controversy between ancient and modern through eclecticism. The philosophical and theological foundations of Brucker's training have to be sought in these years in Jena, at the school of Buddeus; to Buddeus he was a respectful and beloved pupil, and indeed he was among those students whom the master often invited to his home. He became particularly friendly with Buddeus's younger brother, Carl Friedrich (1692–1716), who died young while in the process of writing a book on the history of philosophy.[1] His other teachers in the Theology Faculty were Michael Förtsch, an exponent of Pietism, and the orientalist Johann Andreas Danz (1654–1727); he also attended the lectures on logic

[1] Brucker still remembered him with affection in 1767: "Half a century later we remember Carl Friedrich Buddeus, then a private teacher at the University of Jena, whose friendship and most elegant erudition we had the good fortune to enjoy as soon as, by the will of divine providence, we arrived at that school. It was he who first aroused our interest in the history of philosophy and urged us on with his essay 'De Pyrrhonis scepticismo' which we published in the *Miscellanea Lipsiensia* shortly before his death in 1716, when he was about to take the post of rector of the grammar school in Stettin, an essay that we have republished, after extending and emending it, in our *Miscellanea*" (Brucker, VI, p. 873).

and metaphysics by Johann Jakob Syrbius, the opponent of Wolff and follower of Thomasius and Buddeus (cf. above, Chapter 5, para 5.7).

In 1720 Brucker left Jena to return to Augsburg where, while awaiting an ecclesiasical position, he devoted himself to research into the history of his own town and continued the studies in literature and the history of philosophy that he had begun at university. In 1724 he was sworn in as *Adjunctus Ministerii* at the Church of the Three Saints in Kaufbeuren near Augsburg and rector of the six classes of the Latin School: "I teach and I acknowledge the pure Christian gospel, founded on the writings of the prophets and apostles of the Old and New Testament and on the unchanged Confession of Augsburg" (Alt, *Jacob Brucker*, p. 43). Brucker was a tolerant man in religious matters; he remained on friendly terms with Catholic scholars (among whom Muratori) [2] and even with the high ecclesiastical dignitaries, and for this reason he experienced some criticism from the more rigid Lutheran circles.

The twenty years that Brucker spent at Kaufbeuren were exceptionally fruitful in literary production but were also much taken up by pastoral and didactic activity. It is surprising how much he managed to write in these years, not only in view of the small amount of time he was able to devote to study, but also considering the isolation in which he lived in Kaufbeuren, a small provincial town without any large libraries, while the nearby town of Augsburg did not have a university, nor any important scientific circle with which he could have maintained contact. All that Brucker could do was to have the books he wanted to consult sent to him from the libraries of other cities, or obtain summaries through friends.

In 1744 Brucker returned to Augsburg, called to the post of pastor of the evangelical church of the Holy Cross, and in 1757 he was chosen as successor to Samuel Wiedemann, parish priest of St Ulric and *Senior* of the *Ministerium evangelicum Augustanum*. Despite these demanding ecclesiastical responsibilities, he by no means abandoned his didactic activity, but up to his death taught philosophy and the history of philosophy to the senior classes at the grammar school of St Anna in Augsburg.

The honours that were poured on Brucker from many European academies contrast with the modesty and reserve of his private life. He was a member of the Academy of Sciences of Berlin from 1731; in 1736 he was nominated as member of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft in Leipzig* directed by Johann L. Mosheim; in 1743 he joined the Latin Society of Jena, of which the theologian Christoph Matthäus Pfaff was president, and in 1748 the *Societas regia scientiarum Gottingensis*; he was also a member of the Academies of Sciences of Bologna, Munich, Duisburg, and Rovereto. In 1742 the King of Prussia, Frederick II, offered him the post of preacher and theologian at the University of Halle, but Brucker refused because to him the peace of his study and the care of the parish entrusted to him seemed

[2] On the epistolary exchange between Brucker and Muratori, which took place from 1743 to 1748 cf. *Edizione nazionale del carteggio di L.A. Muratori*, Vol. 10/II, ed. F. Marri (Florence, 2003), pp. 236–251.

more important. "Be silent, this great man whom you are appointing here is nothing but a poor worm, who is something only by the grace of the Saviour": this is the judgement that Brucker made of himself and his scholarly work in reply to the excessive praises of a visitor (Herrre, *Jakob Brucker*, p. 385). The more famous his learning became, the more he emphasized the words of St. Paul "Christ our wisdom" (*Christus, unsere Weisheit*), which he used as his personal motto. And his last work was not a treatise on philosophy for specialists, but a theological work directed at simple readers of the Bible, especially young people. His death came unexpectedly on 26th November, 1770 and was appropriate for a scholar like Brucker: he fell from a stool in his library while he was trying to reach a book from a high shelf.

8.1.2. Brucker's interest in the history of philosophy developed from the early years of his stay at Jena under the guidance of J.F. Buddeus, who, although professor of Theology at the University, had never given up the study of philosophy he had begun at Halle. Brucker's first essay was on Pyrrho of Elis, "De Pyrrhone a Scepticismi universalis macula absolvendo" (Jena, 1716; ML, v, pp. 236–249), followed two years later by a general work on the logical doctrine concerning ideas, with which he obtained the degree of *magister* in philosophy: *Tentamen introductionis in Historiam doctrinae logicae de Ideis* (Jena, 1718), later enlarged with a "Supplementa ad historiam de ideis, varia paraleipomena et observationes complectens" and later published with its definitive title, but without the author's name, *Historia philosophica doctrinae de Ideis, qua tum veterum imprimis Graecorum tum recentiorum philosophorum placita enarrantur* (Augsburg: apud. D.R. Mertz et J.J. Mayer, 1723). This work already displays Brucker's good training in the whole of the history of philosophy, from Plato to Locke and Leibniz, and addresses, in addition to themes on logic, questions of physics and metaphysics linked to or dependent on the question of logic (cf. below, para 8.1.4).

As a preparation for works of a wider range, Brucker concentrated on specific topics of the history of philosophy, with brief articles or letters: "Schediasma historico-philosophicum de convenientia numerorum Pythagorae cum Ideis Platonis" (later collected in *Miscellanea Historiae philosophicae, litterariae, criticae*, pp. 56–109); "De Stratonis Lampsacensis Atheismo dissertatio epistolica" (*ibi*, pp. 154–169); "Epistola de Providentia Stoica ad J.G. Schelhornium, amicum jucundissimum" (*ibi*, pp. 147–154). Three longer works are contained in *Otium Vindelicum, sive Meletematum historico-philosophicorum triga, in quibus praecipua veteris philosophiae dogmata, plurima item scriptorum veterum loca explicantur et illustrantur* (Augsburg, 1729): namely the "De Comparatione philosophiae gentilis cum Scriptura Sacra et religionis Christianae dogmatibus caute instituenda" (pp. 1–126), previously published in Jena in 1719; the "Observationes criticae in Historiam philosophiae gentilis ab Anonymo A.S.R. 1724 Gallico idiomate. Hagae Comitum editam" (pp. 127–202: it is a review of Burigny's *Histoire de la philosophie païenne*); and the "De honoribus sapientiae auctoribus et doctoribus apud Barbaros et Graecos post fata exhibitis" (pp. 203–276). The first of these three texts is interesting because it deals with a subject already discussed by Buddeus

and Heumann regarding the nature and function of philosophical historiography: the history of philosophy can without doubt be of use in defending the Christian religion and it can be helpful in the interpretation of Scripture; but this attitude must not be taken to extremes, lest it corrupt Christianity and the true sense of the Bible; hence words of caution are necessary, which Brucker took from the article "De fide historica" in the *Acta philosophorum*.

In 1731 the first volume appeared of an ambitious work that would eventually total about 10,000 pages in 12°: *Kurtze Fragen aus der Philosophischen Historie, von Anfang der Welt bis auf die Geburt Christi, mit ausführlichen Anmerckungen erläutert*, Erster Theil (Ulm: bey D. Bartholomäi und Sohn, 1731). In the same year the second part came out, while from the third (1732) to the seventh part (1736) the work had this title: *Kurtze Fragen aus der Philosophischen Historie, von der Geburt Christi bis auf unsere Zeiten, mit ausführlichen Anmerckungen erläutert*. The following year a volume of addenda was published: *Neue Zusätze verschiedener Vermehrungen, Erläuterungen und Verbesserungen der Kurtzen Fragen aus der philosophischen Historie* (Ulm, 1737). In its completed form the *Kurtze Fragen* represent the greatest work on the history of philosophy that had appeared up to that time; the question and answer method and the use of German were intended to make the material more accessible (cf. below, para 8.1.5). But the excessive long-windedness of the work made it difficult for students to use, so Brucker wrote a summary: *Auszug aus den Kurtzen Fragen aus der Philosophischen Historie von Anfang der Welt bis auf unsere Zeiten, zum Gebrauch der Anfänger* (Ulm: bey D. Bartholomäi und Sohn, 1736; cf. below, para 8.1.6); which in the second edition had the title: *Erste Anfangsgründe der philosophischen Geschichte als ein Auszug aus grösseren Werken* (Ulm, 1751, 554 octavo pages).

Meanwhile Brucker had written another long book, this time in Latin, which was to bring him a European reputation: *Historia critica philosophiae a mundi incunabulis ad nostram usque aetatem deducta*, Tomus primus (Leipzig: Literis et Impensis B.C. Breitkopf, 1742). The second volume also appeared in 1742, the third and the first part of the fourth in 1743, and the final part in 1744; in all, the *Historia critica* consists of five quarto volumes (cf. below, para 8.1.7). The second edition, likewise published in Leipzig 1766–1767, includes a sixth volume of addenda: *Appendix, accessiones, observationes, emendationes, illustrationes atque supplementa exhibens* (1767). An anastatic edition was edited by R.H. Popkin and G. Tonelli (Hildesheim-New York, 1975). Brucker also extracted a textbook from his *Historia critica*, and used it in his lectures on the history of philosophy at the grammar school in Augsburg: *Institutiones historiae philosophiae usui academicae iuventutis adornatae* (Leipzig: Impensis B.Ch. Breitkopfii, 1748, 1756[2]; cf. below, para 8.1.8); the third edition was edited by the Kantian F.G. Born and published in Leipzig in 1790, with additions on Hume, Swedenborg, Baumgarten and, above all, Kant. For school use the *Tabulae memoriae, aeri incisae, Historiae philosophiae secundum elegantissimum ordinem Jacobi Bruckerii in usum studiosae iuventutis* were also compiled (Leipzig, 1753).

As well as these major works, which surveyed the entire development of the history of philosophy, various articles appeared on particular questions:

"Dissertatio Historico-critica de secta Elpisticorum", in MB, V (1737), Halle 1737, pp. 222–236 (the Elpistics, who were mentioned by Plutarch, were called representatives of the Stoic sect); "De vestigiis philosophiae Alexandrinae in Libro Sapientiae", in MB, VI (1740), pp. 150–179; "Lettre sur l'Atheisme de Parmenide", in BG, XXII (1731), pp. 90–98. Many of the articles, letters, and dissertations, divided by content into three groups, historico-philosophical, historical, and critico-philological, are collected in the *Miscellanea historiae philosophicae, litterariae, criticae, olim sparsa edita, nunc uno fasce collecta, multisque accessionibus aucta et illustrata* (Augsburg, 1748). The following can be added to the previously mentioned writings on the history of philosophy: "De Stoicis subdolis Christianorum imitatoribus", *ibi*, pp. 255–257; "De Davide de Augusta", *ibi*, pp. 291–301; "De versione Italica hypotyposeon Philippi Melanchthonis", *ibi*, pp. 323–333.

Another important sector of Brucker's literary activity was that of political, civil, and literary history. Very soon after his return to Augsburg he wrote a *Praefatio, sermone vernaculo scripta, De scriptoribus Rerum Turcicarum* (Augsburg, 1722) and, in following Suetonius, the *Leben der Gemahligen der ersten xii Römischen Kaiser* (Augsburg, 1724). But his historical interests were mainly aimed at a reconstruction of the history of the town of Augsburg and of its most illustrious citizens: *Praefatio de Scriptoribus Historiae Augustae* (Augsburg, 1723); *De vita et scriptis Eliae Ehingeri Commentatio, qua haud pauca Historiam litterariam, praesertim Augustanam, illustrantia adducuntur* (Augsburg, 1724); *Incunabula Typographicae Augustanae*, new edition with the title *Historie von dem Anfang der Buchdruckerkunst in Augsburg* (Augsburg, 1750); *Programma de Meritis gentis Fuggeriadae in Litteras* (Kaufbeuren, 1732); *Historia vitae Adelphorum Occonum ad illustrandam rem litterariam et medicam saeculi xvi comparata* (Leipzig, 1734); *Dissertatio epistolica de meritis in rem litterariam, praecipue Graecam, Davidis Hoeschelii* (Augsburg, 1738); *Synopsis vitae Hieronimi Wolfii, Ephori Gymnasii St.-Annaeni, ab ipsomet scriptae* (Augsburg, 1739). Finally, Brucker wrote a great biographical work, very well known in Europe: *Pinacotheca scriptorum nostra aetate litteris illustrium. Vitas, scripta, litterarum merita recensuit Jac. Bruckerus. Imagines expressit J.J. Haidius* (4 Vols., Augsburg, 1741–1755). This contains the lives of doctors, mathematicians, theologians, historians, and philosophers, among them C.M. Pfaff, J.L. Mosheim, J.G. Walch, J.C. Gottsched, S.J. Baumgarten and, among the foreigners, Laura Maria Caterina Bassi of the *Istituto delle Scienze* of Bologna, and L.A. Muratori. At the same time the German edition of the same work was published: *Bildersal itzt lebender und durch Gelahrtheit berühmter Schriftsteller, in welchem derselbigen nach wahren Original-Mahlereyen entworfene Bildnisse in Kupfer vorgestellt und ihre Lebensumstände um die Wissenschafften und Schrifften aus eingedandten Nachrichten verfasset und erzählet werden* (Augsburg, 1741–1755). The following book contained the lives of fifty German scholars, and had the pedagogical purpose of "encouraging emulation" united with the patriotic aim of honouring one's country: *Ehrentempel der deutschen Gelehrsamkeit, in welchem die Bildnisse gelehrten und um die schönen und philologischen Wissenschaften verdienter Männer unter den Teutschen aus*

dem 15., 16. und 17. Jahrhundert aufgestelt und ihre Geschichte, Verdienste und Merkwürdigkeiten entworfen werden (Augsburg, 1747).

Let us finally list the works written by Brucker in the context of his pastoral activity and religious interests. Most of these are sermons and writings for particular occasions, together with his important work of Biblical translation and commentary. On the occasion of the jubilee for the two hundredth anniversary of the Confession of Augsburg, he wrote: *Die Göttlichkeit der Evangelischen Lehre so wie sie in der Augspurgischen Confession begriffen ist* (Augsburg, 1730); *Erklärung der Sinnbilder und anderer Auszierungen der H. Dreyfaltigskeits-Kirche in des Heil. Röm. Reichs-Stadt Kauffbeyern, wie solche an dem 25 June 1730 hochfeyerlich begangenen Jubel-Fest aufgestellt worden* (Augsburg, 1730)*; Beschreibung der Jubel-Müntze, welche bey erfreulicher Begehung des in Kauffbeyern celebrirten Jubel-Fests wegen Uebergab der Augspurgischen Confession* (Augsburg, 1730); *Predigt über die seelige Bekantniss Jesu Christi vor den Menschen, gehalten am 28 Dezember 1731 in der Hl. Dreyfaltigkeitskirche zu Kauffbeyern* (Augsburg, 1732). After he became parish priest of Holy Cross in Augsburg in 1744, Brucker celebrated the centenary of the rebuilding of the church in various writings: *Entwurf einer urkundenmässigen Geschichte der evangelischen Pfarrkirche zum Hl. Kreuz in Augspurg, zur Erläuterung der Geschichte der ev. Kirche in Schwaben* (Augsburg, 1753); *Gedächtmiss der Thaten und Wunder Gottes an seinem Volk und Hause, zur 100 Jähr. Einweihung von Hl. Kreuz* (Augsburg, 1753); *Lob- und Gebet- Opfer der evangelischen Gemeinde zu Hl. Kreuz in Augspurg zum 100 Einweihungsfest* (Augsburg, 1753); *Beschreibung der Auszierungen der evangelischen Pfarr-Kirche zu Hl. Kreuz in Augspurg* (Augsburg, 1754).

Brucker's last great work was devoted to the Bible and was intended not only for the learned but also for simple readers of the Holy Scriptures and particularly for young people: *Die Hl. Schrift des alten und neuen Testaments nebst einer vollständigen Erklärung derselben, welche aus den auserlesensten Anmerckungen verschiedener Engländischen Schriftsteller zusammengetragen und der holländischen Sprache an das Licht gestellt, nunmehr aber in dieser deutschen Uebersetzung aufs neue durch gesehen und mit vielen Anmerckungen und einem Vorberichte begleitet worden* (19 Vols., Leipzig, 1757–1770). The first two volumes were edited by R. Teller, professor and pastor in Leipzig, the third to the eleventh volume by J.A. Dietelmair, professor in Altdorf, and the twelfth to the nineteenth volume, that is the volumes on the New Testament, by Brucker himself. The work represents a worthy conclusion to a literary career devoted to a large extent to historical works of great learning, but always inspired by theological and religious motives, intimately linked with the practical life of the pastor and man of the church.

8.1.3. Brucker discussed the theoretical questions of the history of philosophy in the "Vorbereitung" of the *Kurtze Fragen* (I, pp. 1–37) and in the "Dissertatio praeliminaris" to the *Historia critica philosophiae* (I, pp. 3–45). Since Heumann's theoretical work there had been a gradual clarification of the need for the historian of philosophy to begin by confronting the premises and nature of his work, to

indicate its boundaries and internal divisions and its methodological rules, and to offer and promote an interpretation of the history of philosophy that would answer the needs and objectives for which it had been devised. The shifting of interest from the facts of erudition to the theoretical contents, which, as we have seen, was particularly noticeable in the world of German culture, demanded, on the other hand, a more precise definition of the history of philosophy's object. The first problem that Brucker addressed was indeed that of the boundaries of his history; this involved defining the concept of philosophy "lest after hastening into strange places and slipping into the regions of universal learning, it should have nowhere firm to stand" (Brucker, I, p. 3).

Brucker's polemic attacked not only the seventeenth-century scholars Otto Heurnius and Georg Horn, but also the contemporary *Histoire critique de la philosophie* by André-François Boureau-Deslandes, who had included under the term philosophy "the theology of the ancients, jurisprudence, and the sources of all the sciences including even the very origins of the peoples" (Brucker, I, p. 3; cf. above, Chapter 3, para 3.1.3).

A philological and historical examination of the meanings of the term "philosophy" leads to such diverse and contradictory results that it becomes almost impossible to grasp its particular distinctive elements: in Antiquity the name philosopher was used indiscriminately to indicate the theologian, the priest, the poet, and the orator and, in modern times, the professor in the faculty of philosophy and also the philologist and the historian. So one has to ask oneself, as Heumann had, what is the true concept of philosophy, universally valid (*propriam significationem philosophiae*) because it is founded on a definition of its nature and finality: "For the moment it is enough to observe that none of these meanings is as yet sufficiently clear, nor capable of showing what *philosopher* and *philosophy* are; however, without this definition we cannot understand what the history of philosophy is (*was die philosophische Historie sey*) and we cannot express any useful opinion on the philosophers involved in it, on their principles, and on the teachings that derive from these principles. Thus we ought to concern ourselves with the true concept of philosophy (*um den rechten Begriff der Philosophie bekümmern*)" (*Kurtze Fragen*, I, pp. 3–4).

As far as its object and purpose are concerned, philosophy coincides with wisdom, but it differs in its form. The knowledge of divine and human truths with a view to happiness is common to both philosophy and wisdom; however, the value of their understanding is different: "Without doubt philosophy is the love or study of wisdom; then wisdom is the solid knowledge of those things, whether divine or human, which contribute to the true happiness of men and which can in their own way be applied to use and practice; if such application is correctly established, with the result that true human happiness is fostered, then wisdom is assumed in its true meaning. This is what distinguishes wisdom from philosophy: the latter expounds the principles and rules of divine and human truth and teaches on what foundation the happiness of the human race may be acquired, preserved, and increased. In this way philosophy, by resting on its own foundations, produces science; but

if it is not capable of being translated into practice, it is unworthy of the name of wisdom". [3]

Philosophy expounds "the principles and rules" of divine and human truth and in what way (*qua ratione*) happiness can be attained, while wisdom indicates that possession of that truth has already come about; thus, philosophy, resting on its own foundations, produces science. In the *Kurtze Fragen* the distinction between philosophy and wisdom is set out in the following terms: "the philosopher is the person who has in his mind a well-grounded knowledge (*eine gründliche Erkänntnis*) of the true and the good, while the wise man puts that knowledge into practice" (*Kurtze Fragen*, I, p. 5). Philosophical knowledge is then distinguished from mere and simple knowledge (*einfältige und simple Erkänntnis*) because it is based on its foundations: it is *gründliche* and *gelehrte* according to Heumann's expression. This type of knowledge has three distinctive characteristics: the presence of clear and indubitable principles, the demonstration of the propositions that derive from these principles, and the possibility of resisting, or rather becoming stronger, in the face of objections.[4]

The emphasis on the formal character of philosophical knowledge in its deductive and systematic aspect certainly came to Brucker from the Cartesian spirit, which was fully realized in Wolff's rigorously deductive philosophical system, but also from the tradition of Scholastic rationalism.[5] On the other hand, the definition of

---

[3]Brucker, I, p. 7: "Est vero philosophia amor sive studium potius sapientiae: sapientia vero est solida cognitio veritatis, circa eas res sive divinae sint, sive humanae, quae ad veram hominis felicitatem faciunt, et ad usum et praxin applicari suo modo possunt, quae applicatio si recte instituatur, et ita felicitas hominis vera promoveatur, tum demum sapientiam genuina significatione sumtam exhibet, et hoc ipso sapientiam a philosophia distinguit, quae veritatis divinae et humanae principia et regulas exponit, et qua ratione felicitas humani generis inde vel acquiri vel conservari et augeri queat, tradit, adeoque suis fundamentis nixa scientiam gignit, nisi tamen in usum convertatur, sapientiae nomine indigna est".

[4]"Jene aber erfordert so wohl 1. deutliche, unzweiffelhaffte und gewisse *Principia* und Grund-Sätze, aus welchen alles deutlich kan hergeleitet werden, als auch 2. einen gründlichen, ungezwungenen und natürlichen Erweiss der Sätze aus vorher fest gestellten Grund-Sätzen, durch welche sodann 3. die dargegen gemachte Einwürffe also können beantwortet werden, dass die wahrheit desto fester bekräfftiget wird" (*Kurtze Fragen*, I, p. 8).

[5]Cf. Santinello, "Il problema metodologico nella storia critica della filosofia di Jakob Brucker", p. 301. In this definition of philosophy, in which the systematic character proved to predominate over the human interest, Braun also saw a clear symptom of the influence that Wolffian philosophy had over Brucker, compared with that of his iniitial training at the "eclectic" school of Buddeus (Braun, p. 132). Brucker's movement towards Wolffian ideas, which took place in the 1730s and '40 s, in the period of the greatest spread of Wolffism, did not involve a rejection of all of his previous philosophical training, but rather its integration with a conception that responded better to the demands of systematicity and the rigorous foundation of philosophical questions, an aspiration that was in any case already present in Buddeus. Meanwhile, the echoes of the battle of the Pietest theologians against Wolff were fading away. According to the account that Brucker was to give in the sixth volume of the *Historia critica*, there was at the base of the polemic against Wolff's Spinozism a misunderstanding, due to Buddeus' misinterpretation of Wolffian metaphysics: "Although he [Buddeus] was distinguished for the incomparable breadth of his erudition, yet he was not sufficiently expert in Wolffian philosophy, and since he practised a more 'popular' style of writing

the contents and practical finality of philosophy, such as the precise distinction between philosophy and theology, can be traced back to Buddeus and Thomasius: "Thus philosophy is the science of the true and the good, or, if we explain it with the words of the ancients, of divine and human things, aimed at the possession of the true and the good and the consequent happiness, to the extent in which it can be known and demonstrated through the principles of human reason. Therefore, the person who studies the history of philosophy (*Historiam itaque philosophicam consulturis*) should not enter the field of Revelation, nor should philosophy and theology be mixed together, except in so far as theology is part of philosophy, and, to be precise, it is that part of philosophy which is usually called natural theology and which teaches about God and about divine things according to rational principles" (Brucker, I, p. 8).

The definition of philosophy that makes it possible to specify the limits of historiographical investigation is a methodological concept which serves as a guide to research; it is not a particular philosophy that imposes its categories and judgements on the work of the historian, but the fundamental aspect that philosophy maintains unchanged through the centuries, in that it defines the essence of rational science, which proceeds by means of demonstrations. The same general nature of the contents and purpose of philosophy makes the definition applicable to a vast complex of philosophical manifestations from Antiquity to modern times, without precluding any. Once Brucker had established this general criterion, he was to turn to history and concern himself with everything that approaches this definition of philosophy directly or indirectly, to the extent of seeking philosophical ideas even in the most distant expressions of ancient wisdom, and even in antediluvian times. On the other hand, having the concept of philosophy in mind serves to focalize the speculative and philosophical value implicit in every manifestation of thought.

Brucker went on to define the nature of the history of philosophy, looking first of all at the ways in which it can be outlined. It is possible to sketch either the history of the doctrines or the history of the individual philosophers (*Scilicet vel doctrinarum ea est, vel personarum*) (Brucker, I, p. 10). The former can be the "history of a doctrine" through all ages and nations, or the history of the set of doctrines and systems that have appeared through time. The first of these is "the history of philosophical doctrines", while only the second is strictly "philosophical history" (*historia philosophica*). Thus Brucker detached himself decisively from the biographical model; his was to be a history of doctrines and systems organized within a logical structure of principles and consequences. But the history of philosophy is something more than the history of doctrines alone, because it has the task of enlarging one's perspective to the historical framework in which these ideas and systems were born and established themselves.

---

he did not understand enough the profound and esoteric metaphysics of Leibniz and of Wolff and rejected with distrust the sense of those paradoxical hypotheses for fear of offending religion with the audacity of the human mind" (Brucker, VI, p. 899).

This way of understanding the history of philosophy allows the establishment of a reciprocal link between the history of doctrines and the history of the people involved. If in fact the historian's task is to set out the content of systems, he should not forget, however, that the doctrines can only be understood in an authentic and objective way if, even before assessing their internal consistency, they are studied in their genesis to show us the spirit animating the system. The tool of this form of study is an analysis of the *circumstantiae auctorum*, that is, a knowledge of all of the biographical details of the philosopher: his temperament and the education he received, the masters he followed, the adversaries he fought against, his way of life, the place where he was born and lived. The "history of people" (*historia personarum*) thus turns out not to be an empty form of study and an end in itself, but something very useful in the assessment of systems: "but one should not neglect the history of the philosophers, especially those who founded the systems, above all because the circumstances of the philosophers had a great influence on the formation and the nature of their systems, and from them the essential structure should be derived; if people unwisely neglect this, we should not be surprised if they sometimes make gross errors in their interpretation of the systems even if they are learned men, perceptive in other matters" (Brucker, I, pp. 10–11). The example of Plato holds good for all: his teachings, "often barely consistent", can be properly understood only by bearing in mind that "Plato learnt philosophy not only from Socrates, but also from Pythagoras, from Cratylus the Heraclitan, from Parmenides and from Euclid of Megara, and that he brought their doctrines into his storehouse" (Brucker, I, p. 11).

The awareness that philosophical systems and ideas are conditioned by the historical circumstances of their authors is an important new insight in the area of modern philosophical historiography. We have seen, up to this point, that biographical description had the function of answering the reader's curiosity or at the most a moral purpose, offering the lives of the philosophers as examples of virtue and models of living. While not losing sight of these finalities, Brucker assigned biography a more important task, that of defining the nature, the *ratio* or animating spirit of the system. This approach was not found exclusively in the *Historia critica* but was also present in the *Kurtze Fragen*, and so it is possible to say that it had been maturing from the earliest years of Brucker's historical writing.[6] Historical knowledge of the philosophical systems is enriched by a new element of interpretation which adds to and backs up the assessment of their theoretical consistency and systematic

[6]In the "Vorrede" to the first volume of the *Kurtze Fragen*, (p.13), Brucker spoke of the two-fold usefulness of the biographical account: "Denn das hat einen doppelten Nutzen. Einmahl lernet man die Tugenden und Laster solcher Leute, ihre Bemühungen um die Weissheit, ihre Schichsale, ihre Lehr-Arten, Freunde und Feinde kennen, welches dann in der Sitten-Lehre und in der Klugheit zu leben fürtreffliche Dienste thun kan; und so denn lernet man auch diejenige besondere Umstände solcher Männer einsehen, welche in ihre *Systemata* und Haupt-Meinungen einen grossen Einfluss haben, welches man nicht entrathen kan, wenn man vernünfftig und gründlich davon urtheilen will".

value, which it is the task of the philosopher to determine. The function assigned to *circumstantiae* constitutes an important methodological addition to the formation of the history of philosophy as a discipline, in such a way that it tends to take on the form of a positive science, in which all the elements of explanation, of a historical and theoretical kind, are identified and placed in such a condition as to render historical verification more certain and objective.

The subsequent paragraphs of the "Dissertatio praeliminaris" contribute towards the setting up of a correct historical method; in them Brucker defines the qualifications and qualities of the historian of philosophy and the precautions to be observed (Brucker, I, pp. 11–13 and 13–21). The history of philosophy must be studied by somebody endowed with intelligence and cultural knowledge. As to the intellect (*quoad intellectum*), the historian should be able to reason well (*accurate ratiocinari*) in order to clarify and interpret with his own mind the opinions of the ancient philosophers. His will (*quoad voluntatem*) should be free from all feeling of hatred and favour, and he should possess prudence and modesty of spirit, so that his judgement will always be well-considered and never founded on hypotheses.

The most important requirement refers to philosophy. As the historian has to understand and judge philosophical theories and systems, he needs to possess a philosophical mind and a profound philosophical culture: "The history of philosophy requires a historian who is not only careful and learned but also initiated into the mysteries of philosophy; indeed anyone who is merely a visitor to philosophy itself will never understand the ancients, nor will he be capable of comprehending the moderns or be capable of explaining his opinion clearly".[7] Even more important is the following observation: "In order to assess the teaching of the philosophers adequately, it is necessary to reconstruct the whole system on the basis of the writings. First, the general principles have to be discovered, since they are the foundation of the whole edifice of the system, and then the conclusions that derive from these sources can be based on them".[8] Search for the system is the main aim of the historian, who in this conforms with the nature of philosophy. In fact, if it is appropriate for the philosopher to derive conclusions by a correct link (*iuxto nexu*) from some general principles, the interpretation will have to take into consideration the systematic connection, finding it even if at first sight it does not appear. It is evident that in doing a work of this kind, the historian has to transform himself into a philosopher; by saying this, Brucker does not, however, intend to declare that it is necessary for the historian to have a command of a particular philosophical system on the basis of

[7] Brucker, I, p. 13: "Non vero cautum tantum doctumque historicum desiderat historia philosophica, sed et philosophiae mysteriis innutritum; quisque enim in ipsa philosophia hospes est, nunquam vel veteres intelliget, vel recentiores mente assequetur, vel judicium quoque suum interponet feliciter".

[8] Brucker, I, p. 15: "Ut itaque de sententia philosophorum sanum rectumque judicium ferri queat, totum ex eorum scriptis systema ita eruendum est, ut ante omnia principia generalia, quae fundamenti loco toti doctrinarum aedificio subjiciuntur, eruantur, et his demum illae superstruantur conclusiones, quae ex istis fontibus sponte sua fluunt".

which to judge the various philosophies; this possibility can in fact be the cause of misunderstanding, because it may lead the historian to attribute to the philosophers "things that agree with our system and with our hypotheses" (Brucker, I, p. 12). In order to avoid this, the historian will have to remain faithful to some fundamental hermeneutic rules: he should not attribute to a philosopher opinions of his own (*suae opiniones philosophis non supponendae*), nor introduce greater clarity into the teachings of the Ancients than is historically justified (*maior lux non inferenda, quam in se historia habet*), nor should he fit ancient philosophy into present-day ideas (*veteris philosophiae idea ad nostram non exigenda*).

Finally, the historian must know how to evaluate sources and use them correctly: "He should seek out the nearest sources, where they are available, and the rivulets must be compared with the sources" (Brucker, I, p. 13). In the first place, the texts of the philosophers should be examined, where they have come down to us; only in the absence of direct sources can we use the testimony of other authors, but their attitude, whether of favour or hatred, must be assessed carefully and precedence must be given to reliable testimony (*testimonia fide digna*). Among these, those to be definitely excluded are the works of the Neoplatonists and, in general, those of the concordist and "syncretist" philosophers, whose aim was to reconcile the sects with each other and even with the principles of religion: "Therefore we should listen with caution; and be even more cautious about accepting all the Syncretists, that is to say those who reconcile different doctrines and different schools, because they usually corrupt the authentic thought of the philosophers, as is shown by the history of philosophy, ancient, medieval, and modern" (Brucker, I, pp. 16–17).

There can be different levels of historical reliability, from simple verisimilitude, where the sources in our possession contradict each other or are lacking and not very reliable, to almost absolute certainty, when all the sources agree with each other in confirming certain actions or doctrines, which should then be believed "no less strongly than if we had seen them with our own eyes" (Brucker, I, p. 17). Brucker next turned to Heumann, in order to affirm the usefulness of historical pyrrhonism in the situation where it is not possible to reach a sufficient level of certainty: "If there is any doubt we should suspend agreement (*In dubiis suspendendus assensus*)" (Brucker, I, p. 18).

Moving on from the discussion of the methodological reflections present in Brucker's idea of the history of philosophy to its core nature, we find that it is the history of the human intellect, or rather the history of the progress of the intellect: "The description of the destinies of human wisdom is in reality the history of the human intellect, which explains what its value is, in what way, having been wrenched away from the darkness and having been illuminated by the light of truth, it has come through various circumstances and decisive trials to know truth and happiness, through which ravines it has strayed, in which way it has been recalled to the right path and has proceded towards its goal, and in what way it has brought about the happiness of the soul. When the destinies of the human mind have been explained in this way, it becomes clear how much of the path remains to be trodden, what pitfalls are to be avoided, what harbour is to be sought, in short, what is still

to be expected from the human intellect".[9] Thus we find the idea of a certain unity in the historical process despite the fragmentary nature of its realization. This unity is assured by the typical Enlightenment concept of intellect or human reason, which stands above history considered in its particular vicissitudes, but gives a sense to the course of history in its totality; history is understood as the universal path of man, who arrives at his own autonomy and intellectual freedom step by step, passing from the darkness and shadows of ignorance to the light of truth and reason. The individual steps by which the historical process unfolds acquire an importance that goes beyond their contingency and causality, ending up by forming the history of reason, of which they manifest the value, the achievements, and the errors. There is the idea of an advance, of a progression of reason, well symbolized by the picture of light slowly imposing itself on the shadows, through various circumstances and trials, eventually reaching knowledge of truth and happiness; but it is always a matter of partial conquests that do not put an end to the progress of history, intermediate landing places that show what paths are still to be trodden, what dangers are to be avoided, in short, "what is still to be expected from the human intellect".

In fact, the history of philosophy, because of the variety of its realizations, seems opposed to the inner unity of philosophy: "For since truth is one and error is manifold, philosophy, of necessity, comes to be divided into various sects, and the examples of false philosophy and the disagreements between the teachings of the philosophers are infinite" (Brucker, I, p. 30). Truth is unique; on the other hand, errors are many; history never shows us truth wholly attained but only partial results, and, most of all, the contradictions that human reason comes up against and which have impeded it from attaining the truth. Thus, the history of philosophy turns out to be the history of the unfulfilled realizations of the human intellect. Yet the history of philosophy, to the extent that it explains the nature of the impediments, performs the task of freeing us from errors and encouraging the progress of reason.

The discovery of errors is the first and most important useful function of philosophy, because it eliminates the deadly prejudice of authority (*pestilentissimum auctoritatis praeiudicium*), which has held back the progress of philosophy for so many centuries.[10] Thus the history of philosophy is also the necessary introduction

[9]Brucker, I, p. 21: "Est enim haec fatorum sapientiae humanae enarratio revera historia intellectus humani, quae, quid ille valeat, qua ratione tenebris ereptus et veritatis luce collustratus per varios casus, per tota discrimina rerum ad cognoscendam veritatem et felicitatem pervenerit, per quos anfractus aberraverit, qua ratione revocatus in regiam viam ad metam contenderit, quibusque mediis ita felicitati animi ministraverit, luculenter edisserit, et ita expositis ingenii humani fatis, quae via supersit, quae syrtes vitandae, quis portus anhelandus, verbo, quid ab intellectu humano adhuc expectandum sit, exponit".

[10]The theme of usefulness (*utilitas historiae philosophicae*) is discussed at length in the "Dissertatio praeliminaris" (Brucker, I, pp. 21–31), following the framework that we have met in Gerhard and Heumann. Apart from its specific function, which is to be the history of the human intellect, a list of errors, and a summary of inventions and things still to be discovered, Brucker emphasizes its importance as an auxiliary science to the other disciplines, *adminiculum omnium scientiarum*, in particular to theology, jurisprudence, and medicine, which constituted, with philosophy, the four faculties of the university system of the period.

to the exercise of philosophy, in the first place because it points out the paths to follow and the dangers to avoid, setting great store by the experience of others, and secondly because it provides the distinctive characteristics of true and false philosophy, showing how, in the course of the centuries, the philosophy of the sects has kept the study of the truth hidden and has thus stifled the emergence of "eclectic" philosophy, which for Brucker was the true and authentic way of philosophizing: "In fact, if we learn that great minds, considered almost as divine, have slipped down the slope of the most absurd and harmful errors, the deadly prejudice of authority will fall, and a correct and philosophically profitable diffidence towards any philosopher, even if very famous, will be encouraged; thus people will no longer accept the opinions of someone simply because he is well known, and only what turns out to be true after a careful examination will be admitted as true. Attention to this precaution by historians of philosophy would easily have freed the human mind from the Aristotelian yoke, the intolerable servitude of which has oppressed the philosophical world for so many centuries, and would in fact have protected it from any tendency towards Scholasticism, a method as contrary to the freedom of philosophizing and the wholesome search for truth as it is the eternal enemy of truth" (Brucker, I, pp. 21–22). In modern times the study of the history of philosophy had shown its ability to reawaken philosophy and to encourage its progress, bringing about an end to Scholastic hegemony and the Aristotelian yoke and promoting the rise of philosophy in its eclectic form.

The way in which Brucker saw the relationship between philosophy and the history of philosophy is analogous to that of Buddeus and of Heumann. If, as the "eclectic" school would have it, freedom of research and the critical nature of judgement are at the base of philosophy, the possession of the history of philosophy becomes the indispensable aid to a correct philosophical attitude. There is a relationship of reciprocity between the two disciplines: the history of philosophy makes the research of the eclectic philosopher possible, and in its turn eclecticism provides a technique for reading the past of philosophy which is different from those of both scepticism and dogmatism. Indeed eclectic philosophy does not identify itself with a particular system and collection of teachings, but is the correct form of philosophizing by means of the autonomous, free, and critical use of the intellect: "For us the only eclectic philosopher is he who rejects every prejudice of authority, veneration, and antiquity, of sects and other similar prejudices, and takes account only of the rule of innate reason; from the nature, character, and essential properties of the things that he has decided to examine he derives clear and evident principles, from which, following the correct law of reasoning, he deduces conclusions regarding philosophical questions. After establishing this rule, through his reading of the thought of the other philosophers, and in his examination and assessment of their teachings, he does not accept anything that does not satisfy the seriousness of the arguments and the vigour of the demonstrations".[11] This definition of eclecticism,

[11] Brucker, V, p. 4: "Nempe ille solus nobis eclecticus philosophus est, qui procul ire iusso omni auctoritatis, venerationis, antiquitatis, sectae, similiumque praeiudicio ad unam rationis connatae

corresponding to that of Buddeus, places great emphasis on the two crucial moments which constitute philosophical research: the first is the explanation of philosophical questions according to reason and the correct norms of demonstration; the second examines the teachings that history offers in the light of the results reached in this way. Hence, again the need to understand and to study the past, not only because it offers the material on which the philosopher can exercise his ability to reflect, but also because it offers possible solutions as useful starting points which make it possible to improve the method, indicating the correct paths that have been followed and the mistakes to avoid. The eclectic does not accept the opinions that the history of philosophy puts before him dogmatically without a preliminary and rigorous examination; but neither is he led by the contrary prejudice to reject straightaway, as erroneous and misguided, the efforts made up to this time to reach the truth. He requires from history the assistance that can illuminate his own personal reflection and speculation, making them easier and more effective.

While eclectic philosophy is the most suitable form of philosophy, it has its limits, which are connected with man's "finite" nature: truth and goodness, the ultimate aim of rational research, remain beyond the real human possibilities of definitive conquest and total possession. In the "Praefatio" to the volume on modern philosophy of the *Historia critica*, just when he recognizes that eclectic philosophy has reached the highest point of its development, Brucker declares that the fundamental teaching he has drawn from the study of the history of philosophy is his conviction of the imperfect nature of the human intellect, incapable of grasping the truth by its own powers alone, and of the absolute perfection of religious truth: "Therefore it is impossible to express how great is the certitude in the most holy faith that has arisen in us, and how many times dislike of human wisdom, which is distracted from the royal way by so many trivialities, has taken possession of us, leading our eyes towards the heavenly sun of eternal wisdom" (Brucker, V, "Praefatio", p. [6]). This attitude of distrust in the capabilities of reason, on the lines of the purest Lutheranism, seems to conflict both with Brucker's fondness for eclectic philosophy, in which reason is expressed in an autonomous and critical form, and with the idea of progress implicit in his concept of historiography. In reality, the author of the *Historia critica*, faithful once again to his master Buddeus, managed to reconcile these opposing tendencies by means of a concept of philosophy, inspired it is true by rationalism, but at the same time very conscious of its own limits and possibilities, beyond which the field of faith opens up, certainly more solid and sure.[12]

---

regulam respicit, exque rerum, quas considerandas sibi statuit, natura, indole, et proprietatibus essentialibus clara et evidentia principia haurit, ex quibus iustis ratiocinandi legibus usus, conclusiones deinde de problematibus philosophicis deducit: hac vero norma posita, in legendis aliorum philosophorum meditationibus ac expendendis examinandisque doctrinarum aedificiis nihil recipit, quod non rationum severitati et demonstrationis rigori faciat satis".

[12]K. Alt emphasizes the centrality of the religious point of view in Brucker's historiography: "Brucker ging in Buddeus' Spuren den Weg des Ekletizismus. Aber nicht aus einem philosophischen Prinzip heraus geht er in dieser Richtung, sein Ziel und Zweck ist rein religiöser und theologischer Art [...]. Dem 'Reiche Gottes' soll alle Philosophie und ihre Geschichte dienen,

Philosophy leads us to conquer a type of truth which is indeed relative to the absolute truth that can be attained through faith alone, but by basing itself on the correct tool, reason, it is able to aspire to an inner perfection, which is given by the degree of rational certainty. The distinction between the camps does not exclude all possibility of contact between the two disciplines and, in particular, philosophy can be of help to religion, at the least by pointing out its necessity and superiority.

The reader of the *Historia critica* can readily observe the religious foundation that animated the personality of Brucker and his concept of the history of philosophy: indeed it shows the origin of natural religion, confirms the historicity of the Bible with reliable sources, explains the history of atheism and the spread of heresy, and clarifies the boundaries between revelation and reason (Brucker, I, pp. 26–28). The events of religion, in turn, are not extraneous to philosophical research, but they affect its progress, as during the Middle Ages when the corruption of the Church contributed to the forming and strengthening of the scholastic system, or in the sixteenth century when the Lutheran reform, bringing Christianity back to its original purity, freed people's spirits from the chains of superstition, promoting the rise of eclectic philosophy.

Eclecticism and the defence of religion, and the exaltation of human reason with the battle against every form of atheism, are clearly to be the two fundamental points of view through which Brucker examined and judged the history of philosophy; but above all they constitute the premises and the deepest motivations which led him to historiographical research and gave a sense to his unceasing activity as a scholar in the field of the history of philosophy.

8.1.4. *Historia philosophica doctrinae de ideis*

8.1.4.1. The *Historia doctrinae de ideis* consists of 302 8° pages, introduced by a dedication to Christoph Otto von Schallenberg, a preface ("Lectori benevolo") and an extensive summary of sixteen pages ("Argumentum"). It is divided into three sections, corresponding to the ancient, medieval, and modern periods: 1. "De philosophorum veterum placitis circa ideis", pp. 1–174; 2. "De Christianorum veterum et medii aevi placitis circa ideis", pp. 175–228; 3. "De placitis philosophorum recentiorum circa ideis", pp. 229–302. The sections are then divided into

---

das ist Bruckers Meinung und Ziel. Deshalb werden alle philosophischen Systeme und Schulen daraufhin geprüft, ob sie diesem Ziele dienen oder nicht und dementsprechend eingeschätzt und beurteil" (Alt, *Jakob Brucker*, pp. 78–79). J. Proust, on the contrary, defines Brucker's Christianity as "liberal and near to deism": "Le rationalisme de Brucker n'est pas le masque mondain d'un apologiste habile, mais bien une option fondamentale de sa pensée. La preuve en est qu'à la différence de plusieurs de ses prédécesseurs il n'exclut pas la religion du domaine de ses investigations. [...]. Il est cependant un point au-delà duquel il ne saurait s'aventurer, c'est celui où le rationalisme poussé jusqu'à ses extrêmes conséquences substitue à la croyance en une religion révélée qui s'accorde en tout point avec la religion naturelle, l'absence de toute croyance, c'est-à-dire l'athéisme"; however, these consequences went further than Brucker intended: "Il est pasteur autant que philosophe, et son ouvrage a pour but d'incliner vers la religion chrétienne les bons esprits, soucieux d'accorder la foi qu'on leur propose avec les exigences de leur raison" (Proust, *Diderot et l'Encyclopédie*, pp. 246 and 254).

various paragraphs, without headings, each discussing one thesis. The material is organised according to academic custom: the brief statement of the subject proposed in the thesis is followed in smaller print by long explanatory notes, in which the subject is dealt with in greater depth, and an annotated bibliography is provided. Long passages from the works of other authors are transcribed in italics and the Latin version is always given alongside the original Greek text for works by the ancient philosophers, while French quotations are given in the original language "because today hardly any scholars are ignorant of this language" ("Lectori benevolo"). The book concludes with an extensive and accurate *Index* of names and subjects, of 26 pages.

8.1.4.2. In this work the traditional division and derivation of the schools is replaced by a different division, more appropriate to the chosen subject. Brucker accepts the division of the entire history of philosophy into three periods – ancient, medieval, and modern – as he was to do later in the *Historia critica*, but, compared with this more important work, here he almost wholly excludes the Eastern peoples ("Plato was the first to apply himself to theory of ideas carefully and in a ordered way": § 2); Brucker only refers to Eastern peoples in a note when discussing Plato's sources (pp. 5–10).

The internal division into three periods is governed by the different emphasis that the question of ideas came to assume over the course of history; in this way the horizon of the history of philosophy is restricted to the point where it only includes those currents of thought that have developed an effective theory of ideas. In the ancient period four different solutions were produced, put forward respectively by Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, and the Epicureans; the other schools (Heraclitus, the Cynics, and the Sceptics) restricted themselves to denying their ideas, and the Romans merely repeated what had been asserted by the Greeks.

The "middle" period which Brucker made to coincide with Christian thought in opposition to the pagan philosophy of antiquity, includes both Patristics and Scholasticism. The Fathers of the Church (Justin, Clement, Augustine, Synesius of Cyrene) accepted Platonic ideas more or less openly, while the Scholastics, divided into the sects of the nominalists (Roscelin of Compiègne, Abelard, Ockham), and the realists (Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus), more often adopted the Aristotelian solution.

For the modern era the account proceeds on the basis of problems: the various authors and directions of thought appear from time to time according to the question raised; thus, on the subject of the origin of ideas ("De origine idearum vexata quaestio", pp. 238–269) the positions of Locke, Hansch, Leibniz, Arnauld, Poiret, and Malebranche are illustrated and compared, and on innate ideas ("Controversiae de ideis innatis", pp. 269–282) the teachings of the Cartesians, Du Hamel, Leibniz, Locke, and Buddeus. In this way, in the close comparison between contrasting positions, the debate with the authors becomes more topical and relevant.

8.1.4.3. In proposing a history of the theory of ideas from Antiquity to modern times, Brucker wanted to make the reader aware of the great difference between ancient and modern concepts of idea. In Antiquity, beginning with Plato, the notion

embraced a very wide context of philosophical questions, which went from metaphysics to physics, and only secondarily referred to logic; while in modern times ideas referred solely to the field of epistemology: "In fact, those who particularly fell in love with ideas, by which they meant universals and the essential principles of things, separated them from the concepts and ideas of things dealt with in rational philosophy, and supposed that they were endowed with their own substantiality and that one should therefore examine them through metaphysics and general physics rather than through logic. This should be kept well in mind when comparing the teachings of the modern philosophers regarding ideas with the thought of the Ancients, so that one does not imagine them to be identical, since they are on the contrary very different, following the intention of their authors" (pp. 2–3).

The actual opportunity that gave birth to the theory of ideas appeared in the field of physical science: "Heraclitus's hypothesis that all things flow and that there is nothing certain in them provided the opportunity to think of the other principle that places being as constant and permanent which can, precisely for this reason, be the object of science" (p. 16). Thus the first meaning of the Platonic idea is of a metaphysical order, as appears from the definition that is taken from *Parmenides* and *Timaeus*: "For Plato, ideas are the eternal models and the forms of sensible things; they are endowed with their own substantiality and in their own way they contain reason and intelligence in themself" (pp. 35–36).

The analysis of ideas as models of perceptible things involves the fundamental themes of Platonism: God has modelled the world according to the examples he has produced himself but having made use of pre-existent matter he is not a Creator God in the Christian sense: "Like the other pagan philosophers, he attributed the origin of evil not to the incorrect use of freedom but to matter, as it is a passive or necessary principle and is by its nature always opposed to freedom and to good" (pp. 46–47).

The interpretation of Plato, who is considered as autonomous and distinct both from the Church Fathers, who made him into a "Hellenizing Moses" and, above all, from the Neoplatonists, is one of Brucker's most characteristic and constant themes. On the subject of the concept of ideas, the difference between Plato and the Neoplatonists turns out to be very clear for the historian: Plotinus and his school misunderstood the nature of Plato's world of ideas, setting it in the divine intellect: "Plato attributed ideas not only with eternity and immortality, which could easily be reconciled with previous teaching, but also with the character of being itself a substance *ex se* or *per se* (*Parm*., T. III *Opp*., p. 135) and he made this opinion known in many places, as is abundantly shown by the passages cited above, and it could be proved at greater length with other passages if necessary. Having understood ideas as particular substances and having for this reason called them beings in themselves and the only true objects of the intellect (*Tim., Opp.* T. III, p. 94), it necessarily follows that he separated them from the divine intellect" (pp. 67– 68). While recognizing the absurdity of the Platonic theory of separate ideas, which incidentally stopped Plato from falling into monism and into the atheism of the Neoplatonists, Brucker considered it to be authentic, and as a confirmation referred to the derision of Diogenes the Cycnic and the evidence of Aristotle which, since they were contemporaneous, were to be preferred to the interpretation of Plutarch

and the Neoplatonists, who were perhaps driven by a desire to defend their master from the facile accusation of inconsistency and contradiction.

After examining ideas in relation to God as objects of metaphysics, Brucker tackles the meaning of ideas in relation to men as the foundation of science. Knowledge of ideas is the purpose of all of Platonic philosophy; it has an aim that is not only epistemological but also ethical. Brucker gives much space to the myth of the cave (pp. 115–119) which illustrates the various stages by which man is freed from the chains of the perceptible and comes to the final attainment of science.

In opposition to the attempt to reconcile the thinking of Aristotle with that of Plato, Brucker emphasizes the profound difference that exists between the philosophers precisely because of their contrasting concept of ideas. Aristotle did not deny ideas, but he included them within matter, excluding them from transcendance in relation to sensible things. Aristotelian physics thus becomes a synthesis of that of Plato and that of Democritus: "However, in the doctrine of natural things, Aristotle did not only have recourse to the arrangement of particles and the movement of atoms, as the corpuscular philosophy of his time did, but, taking an intermediate way between Plato, who upheld the idea of separate universals, and the followers of Heraclitus and Democritus, who denied forms of this type, he mixed forms with natural causes and placed matter and form among the principles of natural things. From them the essence of things is composed and of them the former is modified in some way, the latter on the other hand always remains the same and defines the nature and essence such as it is" (pp. 138–139). Brucker did not see any link between this theory of ideas made up of Aristotelian physics, and logic, considered only as the art of syllogism, hence useless and captious: "so that his disciples could discuss things from both sides, at length and with ingenuity" (p. 143). The categories do not have anything universal or objective, but are ways of connecting ideas inferred from the particular nature of the Greek language.

Rather than logic, as dialectic and *ars demonstrandi*, Brucker prefers, in conformity with the demands of much of modern philosophy, and following Thomasius's project of a logic without syllogisms, the *ars inveniendi*, a method of research that can lead to the discovery of new truths. This perspective had already emerged in Antiquity through Epicurus "who was wiser than the others in this matter" (p. 168); he considered ideas not as forms of things but as notions of the mind, and attributed them to the working of the senses: "In physics Epicurus abandoned all forms and substances and taught that things are constituted on the basis of the changeable meeting and gathering of atoms; but in logic, although he had despised it and was accused of not having any, he attributed ideas to the operation of the senses and placed them at the foundation of all reasoning and as the criterion of truth, often using the term 'anticipation' in connection with them" (pp. 158–159). The Stoics, on the other hand, while considering ideas to be "notions of things in our minds" gave themselves over to dialectical subtleties, just as the Aristotelians had done.

Patristic philosophy did not assume any original positions on the subject of ideas, and the theme was of more interest during the Middle Ages, when it gradually took shape through the dispute on universals. Brucker shows prejudice against Scholasticism, and this was not a novelty in the philosophical historiography of

the period; however, he does make an effort to clarify and understand the different positions, even if the whole dispute seems pointless to him, to be listed among controversies over words (*inter contentiones de vocibus*). As well as distinguishing between nominalists and realists, Brucker notes a difference in the positions within the two sides, which repeat the concepts of the Ancients, even while obscuring them. The nominalists recall the Stoics, the realists partly Plato and partly Aristotle (p. 220).

The Scholastics, with their formal distinctions and subtleties, have corrupted the whole of philosophy. The modern philosophers were aware of this; they took different paths, choosing reason and experience as their guide; they confronted the question of ideas on new bases, no longer in the range of physics, from which substantial forms were expelled, but in the field of rational philosophy: "Now the question appears under a totally different light and the treatment of ideas is improved and restored to its natural place. [. . .] The treatment of ideas has now been beought back to rational philosophy, which examines the nature and workings of the intellect" (pp. 229–230). The reconstruction of the theme of ideas in the modern era is expressed in the terms of Locke's *Essay*. In this phase of his historiographical work, Brucker showed that he knew and appreciated Locke more than Leibniz, and in this he was faithful to the teaching of his masters at the University of Jena (Buddeus and Syrbius).

The position of Locke's *Essay* emerges from the definition of ideas, "what is in the mind when one thinks" (p. 239), and even more in the criticism of innate ideas, linked to the principle of authority (p. 274) and in the solution to the problem of the origin of ideas; referring to this last theme, Brucker distinguishes between the occasion and the cause. On the first point Brucker replies, with Locke, that "it comes about through experience" (p. 240); as to the second, he considers that it was rationally insoluble. After expounding the various hypotheses formulated in the course of the seventeeth century, he concludes by declaring that on a problem of this kind it is only right "to admit modestly one's own ignorance" (p. 239); "it is clearly proved from all of these disputes that the question of the origin of ideas is so difficult that it is easier to refute the thinking of others than to propose better and more solid solutions" (p. 265).

8.1.4.4. From a methodological point of view, the *Historia de ideis* shows certain aspects that we shall find again in Brucker's more important works. First of all, there is the linear style, the clear and simple language, accessible to all: "We write for all, both the unlearned and the learned" ("Lectori benevolo", p. [7]), as Brucker declares, repeating the words of Ménage in his commentary on Laertius (cf above, Chapter 1, para 1.6.2). And indeed the purpose of Brucker's philosophical historiography is not to display pure erudition but rather to encourage a greater knowledge of the most topical philosophical subjects and to serve as a guide for young people in their studies. The choice of the theme for this first historiographical work is indicative of this intention: besides the topical nature of the question of ideas, in the wake of the publication of Locke's *Essay* and the position taken by Leibniz's philosophy, the subject was arousing an interdisciplinary interest, involving different areas, from logic to metaphysics, physics, and theology.

Brucker's focus of interest is in the *dogmata*, the content of the systems. His intention was to react against the excessive space and importance given in previous historiographical works to the biographical account, often presented separately from the teachings, as a source of curiosity and erudite practice: "Therefore we have given more emphasis to the history of doctrines, and in general have missed out all the rest, except for those things that had of necessity to be linked with the same doctrines" ("Lectori benevolo", p. [4]). The reference to biographical events is occasional and has a function in the reconstruction of teachings, as in the mention of Aristotle's stay with the Platonic school, which helps us to understand the criticism of the concept of separate ideas and the new notion of idea, a form inherent in sensible things. However, the attempt to attribute to *circumstantiae* the task of explaining systems, which was to constitute, from the *Kurtze Fragen* onwards, one of the most important components of Brucker's historiography, is not yet developed in a systematic way here.

There is constant reference to the works of the philosophers, following a model of objective and critical historiography to which Brucker would always remain faithful: "We have derived everything from the sources, and where possible we have provided the very words of the authors, in order to explain their systems in their entirety".[13] The historical reconstruction is based more on the texts of the philosophers than on the interpretation of them, ancient or modern. In this way Brucker could distinguish Plato's philosophy from the concept of the Neoplatonists and from the picture given by the Fathers of the Church: "One should not expect any better from the Neoplatonist philosophers and from the interpreters, who, in order to clarify the sense, have frequently offered us their own thought in place of Platonic principles" (p. 21). Later, Brucker affirms, against Ficino and the Neoplatonists of the Renaissance, that "the Neoplatonists explained Plato to us in a way that seems to be not what he actually said but what he should have said, as is clearly shown by comparing the principles established by Plato with their writings; in this Jean Le Clerc and Jakob Thomasius judged correctly" (pp. 45–56). Plato's philosophy is taken not only from certain passages of the *Timaeus*, as many earlier historians had done, but also from many other dialogues, among them the *Parmenides*, *Republic*, *Theaetetus*, *Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*, *Philebus*, *Laws, Cratylus, Meno*, the *Sophist*, and the *Statesman.*

The wealth of direct references to works had not only an archaeological purpose, to bring to light in their purity teachings that were buried and forgotten, but it also had the function of liberating the history of philosophy from the false interpretations that had long become established, such as the placing of Platonic "ideas" within the divine intellect, and of pointing out theories that, even if they had become obsolete, were still the necessary starting point for a serious and properly-grounded discussion on the origin and nature of ideas, a question very much alive in the philosophical culture of Brucker's time. Thus history of philosophy proves to be an indispensable

[13] "Lectori benevolo", p. [3]: "Cuncta enim ex originibus suis derivabimus, ipsorumque, ubi copia erat, auctorum verba dedimus, quod haud raro factum est, ut tota eorum systemata essent explicanda".

aid to the study of philosophy, following an idea that Brucker had learnt at the school of Buddeus and that he was to put forward in the "Dissertatio praeliminaris" of the *Historica critica.*

8.1.5. *Kurtze Fragen aus der philosophischen Historie*

8.1.5.1. The *Kurtze Fragen*, published in Ulm between 1731 and 1736, consists of seven parts divided into nine volumes, and a supplementary volume which was added in 1737. The first part, dedicated to the Royal Society of Sciences in Berlin, includes, as well as the dedication, a preface ("Vorrede. Geneigtester Leser") of twenty-seven pages in which the author declares the aim that he has resolved upon, his method of work, and the general characteristics of the book. This is followed by a brief summary of the contents ("Kurzer Entwurf der Fragen aus der philosophischen Historie") in thirteen pages, and finally an introduction ("Vorbereitung", I, pp. 1–38), in which some preliminary questions on the history of philosophy are discussed, as they were to be later and at greater length in the "Dissertatio praeliminaris" of the *Historia critica*: the meaning of the term "philosopher" and the division of philosophy into its parts (I, pp. 1–13), a definition of the history of philosophy (I, pp. 13–14), its usefulness (I, pp. 15–29) and finally the division into periods. The other volumes are introduced in a similar way: they contain their own dedication, a full introduction, in which the reader's attention is drawn to the problems of the historiographical material discussed, and a summary.

The history of philosophy is divided into two great periods, "Von Anfang der Welt bis auf die Geburt Christi", which occupies the first two parts, and "Von der Geburt Christi bis auf unsere Zeiten", from the third to the seventh part. The first period comprises three books: 1. "Von der Philosophia Barbarica" (I, pp. 39–222) in twelve chapters, on philosophy before the Flood, that of the Hebrews, Chaldeans, Persians, Indians, Arabs, Phoenicians, Egyptians, Moors, Celts, ancient Romans, Scythians, and Thracians. The second book, "Von der Kindheit der Philosophie bey der Griechen" (I, pp. 223–344) presents the beginnings of philosophy in Greece, among the poets (Orpheus, Hesiod, Homer) and the lawgivers (Solon and the Seven Wise Men), while the third, "Von dem mannlichen Alter der Griechischen Philosophie" (I, pp. 345–1120; I, pp. 1–820) is in fourteen chapters, each on one of the schools of the Ionic current (Ionics, Socratics, Cyrenaicans, Megarics, the school of Elis, Academics, Peripatetics, Cynics and Stoics) and those of the Italic current (Pythagoras, Eleatics, Heraclitans, Epicureans, and Sceptics).

The second period is divided into two "Haupt-Abtheilungen": 1. "Von Anfang der Römischen Monarchie bis auf die Zeit der Reformation" from the third part to the fifth; 2. "Von der Reformation bis auf unsere Zeiten" in the last two parts. Philosophy from the beginning of the Empire to the Reformation is described in two books, the first of which consists of nearly 2,000 pages: "Von der Philosophie von Christi Geburt bis auf das Medium Aevum" (III, pp. 1–1344; IV, pp. 1–620), with a long chapter "Von dem Zustand und Schicksalen der Philosophie unter den Römischen Kaysern bis auf das Sec. IX" (III, pp. 169–1344) and nearly 450 pages on the exponents of Neoplatonism whom Brucker called "eclectics" (from Potamon,

Ammonius Saccas, and Plotinus to Hierocles, Hypatia and Damascius) (III, pp. 427–873). The fourth part of the entire work, including the philosophy of the Hebrews ("Von der Zustand der Philosophie unter den Jüden", IV, pp. 1–620) and the Church Fathers ("Von der Philosophie der alten Christen", IV, pp. 956–1431), is divided into two volumes (the second going from p. 622 to p. 1450). The fifth part, also divided into two volumes, the first up to p. 776 and the second up to p. 1517, is dedicated to medieval philosophy: "Von der Philosophie Medii Aevi" (V, pp. 1–1517), with a first chapter on the Arabs ("Von der Philosophie der Araber oder Saracener" (V, pp. 11–150) and the second on the Scholastics, "Von der Philosophia scholastica" (V, pp. 511–1326) with a critical examination of the character, properties, and contents of this philosophy: "Von der Beschaffenheit, Eigenschafften und Inhalt der Philosophiae scholasticae" (V, pp. 1239–1326).

The history of modern philosophy, from the Reformation to the early eighteenth century, is dealt with in six books, which anticipate the sub-division of the corresponding section of the *Historia critica*: the first book describes those who continued Scholasticism and the genuine Aristotelians, among them Pomponazzi and above all the Germans from Melanchthon to Jakob Thomasius ("Von den Philosophis Scholastico-Aristotelicis und den genuinen Aristotelicis", VI, pp. 78–526); the second is on the restorers of the ancient schools ("Von denjenigen Philosophis, welche eine alte secte wieder hervorgesucht haben", VI, pp. 527–848), the third on those who in the struggle against sectarian philosophy chose the wrong path, such as the sceptics (Sánchez, Bayle, Huet), the Mosaicists (Comenius) and the theosophists (Weigel, Paracelsus) ("Von denjenigen, welche die sectirische Philosophie vermeiden wollen, aber dabey auf Abwege gerathen sind", VI, pp. 849–1254), the fourth on the syncretists and the enemies of philosophy ("Von denjenigen, welche durch Vereinigung oder Verwerfung der Philosophie der sectirischen Philosophie entgehen wollen", VI, pp. 1255–1323). The seventh part contains the last two books, of which the first is particularly important because it examines the "restorers" of eclectic philosophy and contains all the great philosophers of the modern era: "Von den Reformatoribus philosophiae und Restauratoribus Philosophiae eclecticae" (VII, pp. 1–1044), divided into two chapters: the first, "Von den Reformatoribus der gantzen Philosophie und den vornehmsten Restauratoribus der Eclectischen Philosophie" (VII, pp. 4–637) discusses Bruno, Cardano, Francis Bacon, Campanella, Hobbes, Descartes, Leibniz and Ch. Thomasius; the second chapter ("Von den merckwürdigsten Veränderungen und Verbesserungen in den besondern Theilen der Philosophie", VII, pp. 638–1044) follows the reform of philosophy in its different parts: logic (Ramus, Malebranche, Locke), physics (Sennert, Boyle, Newton, Harvey, Copernicus, Brahe, Galileo), "pneumatology", which comprises the history of modern atheism (Vanini, Spinoza), ethics (Grotius, Selden, Pufendorf), politics (Bodin, Baltasar Gracián, Machiavelli). The final book describes non-European philosophy, "Von der Philosophia exotica" (VII, pp. 1044–1210), in particular the Indo-Chinese, Chinese, Japanese, and Canadian.

At the end of each part there are additional notes and two indices: "Register der Personen und Nahmen" and "Register der fürnehmsten Materien". Adding up the

pages of the individual volumes, we find that the work has in total nearly 9,000 pages, which even in 12° is still quite impressive. The longest part, 4311 pages, is that which deals with "middle" philosophy from the Romans to Scholasticism, while 2533 pages are assigned to modern philosophy, and "only" 1940 to ancient philosophy. There is another more serious disproportion within the *Kurtze Fragen*, which makes reading and consulting the work more difficult: the text is very brief in comparison with the notes given at the end of each answer, which occupy dozens of pages, especially those from Greek philosophy onwards. In the notes the various problems of interpretation are discussed and there are references to the bibliography on each topic.

8.1.5.2. In its general lines, the material covered in the *Kurtze Fragen* anticipates the *Historia critica*, and therefore we can refer to the latter for a more analytical survey of the periodization of Brucker's philosophical historiography. In this context it is enough to clarify some problems of periodization, and the solutions put forward by Brucker in the "Vorbereitung" to the first volume of the *Kurtze Fragen* in response to the question, "How can *historia philosophica* be divided in the best way, to make it as well-ordered and easy to understand as possible?" (I, pp. 29–38).

In order to carry out the above function, it is necessary to refer to chronology and geography, because these two disciplines provide us with a more precise notion of the times and places in which *studium philosophicum* developed and acquired its own specific character (I, pp. 29–30). As the fundamental chronological division is based on the birth of Christ (*vor und nach Christi Geburt*), the history of philosophy also will be divided into two main periods: 1. *Von Anfang der Welt bis auf Christi Geburt*; 2. *Nach Christi Geburt bis auf unsere Zeit*. This two-fold division is the biggest difference with regard to the *Historia critica*, which, as we shall see, presents not two but three periods, since it has the re-birth of letters and the Protestant Reformation function as a break with the past, a break equal to, if not more important than, the coming of Christ. Even though Brucker emphasized this break more in the later work, it is still important in the *Kurtze Fragen*: "Following the religious reform, philosophy also acquired a very different, and better, reputation (*ein ganz anderes und besseres Ansehen*)" (I, p. 36). This judgement is then used by Brucker to divide the second period into two sections, from the beginning of the Roman Empire to the end of Scholasticism, and from the Renaissance onwards, according to whether the philosophers lived before or after the Lutheran reform.

The first period also is divided into two parts, Barbarian philosophy and Greek philosophy, reflecting two different ways of conducting philosophical speculation: the Barbarians did not demonstrate their theories by means of reason, but they handed them down from father to son, while the Greeks conducted their philosophy *in formam artis*, and were the first to philosophize "gründlich und methodice" (I, pp. 30–31).

The further divisions of Barbarian and Greek philosophy, as with Roman, Arab, Christian, and modern philosophy, were to be taken up again, to the letter, in

the *Historia critica*. Barbarian philosophy can be "antediluvian" and "postdiluvian", Greek philosophy "empirical" and "dogmatic". In the Roman period the Greek sects were revived; some people wished to appear eclectic, but in reality they were Platonists, who reconciled the principles of the other schools and the Christian religion with the system of their master. At first the Christians linked themselves to Plato, but from the eleventh century onwards they discovered Aristotle, and thus Scholasticism was born. After the Reformation, some revived genuine Aristotelian philosophy, others restored the remaining Greek sects, while others, more courageous, treated philosophy in an eclectic way (*eclectice*). Finally, after a careful examination of the great philosophical systems of the seventeenth century and the progress of the individual parts of philosophy up to his own time, Brucker extends his survey to the Chinese and their *Haupt-Philosophus* Confucius, considered as contemporaries because of the topicality of the discussion of their teachings.

8.1.5.3. Only five years separate the publication of the first volume of the *Historia critica* (1742) from the appearance of the supplementary volume to the *Kurtze Fragen* (1737), years in which Brucker was working intently on historiographical questions. A profound difference can be noted between the two works, in method and in style, in such a way that the Latin work cannot be considered as a mere translation of the German one; but, given the short period of time separating their publication, the contents prove to be fairly similar, and in particular, the historiographical interpretation that emerges from a reading of the *Kurtze Fragen* can be found faithfully repeated and developed in the *Historia critica*. For this reason it is not necessary at this point to give a complete panorama of the theories and historiographical assessment that belong to the work we are examining; for a view of these we refer the reader to the appropriate paragraph of the section on the *Historia critica* (cf. below, para 8.1.7.3). But for the sake of completeness, to offer a sample of the method of work of the *Kurtze Fragen*, we suggest a reading of the chapter on Platonic philosophy to provide possible comparisons with the *Historia critica*.

The figure and philosophy of Plato, considered by some as almost divine, are set out in the first section of the chapter on the Academic sect: "Von der secta Academica, das ist, dem Platone und seine Nachfolgern. Erster Abschnitt: Von Platone selbst und seiner Philosophie" (I, pp. 572–684). In his long biographical description (I, pp. 572–622) Brucker had already confronted the important interpretative problem of the sources of Platonic thought, referring to the presumed and actual masters from whom Plato learned his philosophy (I, pp. 582–596) and to the syncretism that originated from his system.[14] His first master was certainly

[14]On the sources of Plato's thought, "as he was of a somewhat syncretist way of thinking and inclined to mix up systems" (Brucker, I, p. 632), there is more detail also in the *Historia critica* (pp. 631–641) in the following paragraphs: "Disciplina socratica"; "Studia philosophiae post Socratis mortem"; "Itinera literaria"; "An Hebraeos doctores Plato habuerit?"; "Disciplina Platonis Pythagorica"; "Fontes philosophiae Pythagoricae".

Socrates, with whom Plato stayed for eight years; but after his death, perhaps in order to escape from the persecutions that could be foreseen from conflicts with his disciples, Plato withdrew to Megara to stay with Euclid, where he learnt dialectic and the art of debate; on natural philosophy he listened to Cratylus, a disciple of Heraclitus, and the Pythagoreans Archytas and Timaeus, and then Hermogenes, a follower of Parmenides.

These are the authentic sources of Plato's thought, as is confirmed by the reliable evidence of contemporaries and by remarks in the Dialogues; but the historian also examines and refers to other traditions, such as those regarding the philosopher's travels in the East, in order to verify their authenticity. In Egypt, Plato was alleged to have learned astronomy and geometry and to have come to know the cults and sacred mysteries which were jealously guarded by the priests. According to the Jewish historian Josephus Flavius, Plato had also come into contact with Hebrew scholars who instructed him in Mosaic philosophy. Brucker was inclined to deny the value of these latter testimonies, observing that the first was influenced by the erroneous prejudice concerning the erudition of the Egyptians and their profound philosophy (I, p. 589), because of which people claimed to attribute to the Egyptians the fundamental teachings present in Plato. As far as the question of links with the Hebrews was concerned, on the other hand, Brucker pointed out that while the idea was accepted and defended by many learned men of his time such as Huet and the English Platonists (Gale), Plato's "Mosaic" training was an idea that had taken form later on, especially with the Church Fathers, who had shown an absurd veneration for this philosopher,[15] and the idea was not founded on any source except Josephus Flavius. Thus the presumed harmony between Christianity and Platonism, which found its main historical support in these connections, becomes untenable.

The whole Platonic system can be explained by starting from its various sources: "Since his philosophy was made up of three main parts, as we shall see later, it can quite rightly be affirmed that he learnt dialectics from Euclid of Megara, Parmenides and Zeno of Elea, physics from the Pythagoreans and Heraclitus, and morals from Socrates, and that he compiled his philosophical system from all of these" (I, p. 586). One of the accusations that Brucker most frequently makes against Plato was to be precisely that of the inconsistency of his system, because of his having tried to harmonize, with little capacity for judgement, philosophies that were not only different but often opposed to each other, such as those of Pythagoras and Heraclitus.[16] The result was that Plato frequently contradicted himself and wrote things that

[15] *Kurtze Fragen*, I, p. 590; cf. Brucker, I, p. 637: "in this matter, they [the Church Fathers] gave greater proof of their piety than of their critical judgement".

[16] The birth of the notion of "idea" is related in the *Historia critica* as an example of synthesis between opposing teachings: "As a young man he was taught by Cratylus the Heraclitan that matter is always in movement; it is always changing, it does not remain the same as itself but becomes something other. He maintained this doctrine and at the same time he added to it the numbers of Pythagoras, that is to say his ideas and those eternal and immutable principles, and thus he

are inconsistent, in such a way that it is a waste of effort to try to harmonize them (I, p. 628).

Together with the accusation of inconsistency came that of obscurity (*er nicht deutlich heraus gesagt, was seine Meinung seye*), due mainly to the adoption of the arcane or secret method in use among the Pythagoreans: "Plato distanced himself from the wise philosophical method that Socrates used; as a result of his travels he fell in love particularly with the Pythagoreans and their philosophy and organized his philosophy according to their arcane method" (I, p. 627). Another cause of obscurity was Plato's use of the dialogue and his unsystematic procedure. The lack of systematicity is seen by Brucker as a defect, attributable to Plato's inability to proceed by correct demonstrations, rather than as a conscious choice and a characteristic aspect of his thinking. Faithful to his definition of philosophy as system, Brucker was to make an effort to combine the various theoretical elements present in the dialogues, looking for the systematic connection that Plato had not managed to grasp clearly.

Thus for Brucker there are objective difficulties to overcome in any faithful and complete historical reconstruction of Platonic thought; these difficulties were accentuated by a certain philosophical and historiographical tradition that had long identified Plato with the Neoplatonists, and by the false idea of an agreement between the Christian religion and Platonism. These aspects had led to attributing many parts of Plato's philosophy with a sense that was not genuine (*einen fremden Verstand*). Brucker sets himself the task of demonstrating the irreconcilability of the Platonic and the Neoplatonic systems and the difference between them and Christian teachings. To this end, he was to make direct use of Plato's writings; but as this task was complicated by the asystematic nature of the Athenian philosopher's thought, Brucker made use of works by authors who lived before the era of neoplatonic syncretism, in particular Albinus' *Epitome*: "As we have mentioned, Plato did not describe his theories in a systematic way, but they were first put in order by scholars and followers. Therefore here we shall follow Alcinous' *Delineatio*, as it is the best arranged summary; however, we shall do so only when it is necessary and we shall not accept anything that cannot be demonstrated with appropriate passages from Plato (*aus richtigen Stellen Platonis kan erwiesen werden*)" (I, pp. 641–642).

The work by Albinus, a Platonist who lived in the second century A.D. and who was known in the eighteenth century by the name of Alcinous, makes it possible to collect the various teachings of Plato in a systematic way; the reading of the Dialogues, which Brucker seems to have preferred, is in fact inserted in the unitary survey offered by Albinus' work. This is immediately shown by the division of philosophy into dialectic, theoretical disciplines (which include theology and physics), and practical disciplines, that is, ethics and politics, and by the

---

defined as fixed and immutable that which for Heraclitus was by nature always in movement, and he defined as identical in itself and permanent what was for the other always different" (Brucker, I, p. 666).

definition of philosophy which is "love of wisdom, which leads the soul, freed from the body and from its chains, to examine the truth and what is real and can be understood only through reason". [17]

Despite Brucker's intention to offer a picture of Plato different from that present in Neoplatonism, he is at times close to the neoplatonic vision, because of the systematic preoccupation that guides his historiographical work even in this part, and because of his acceptance of Albinus as his guide. Although Albinus lived before Ammonius and Plotinus, he expressed very similar concerns and had already attempted to reconcile the works of Plato and Aristotle, especially in the area of logic. Thus, in Brucker's reconstruction too, Platonic dialectic corresponds to Aristotelian logic: it contains the distinction between opinion and science, the definition of *intellectio* and *intelligibilia*, the various modes of judgement and propositions, and the distinction between dialectic and rhetoric. Finally, Brucker discusses the doctrine of the origin of knowledge as reminiscence: "Knowledge is none other than the soul's memory (*als eine Wiedererinnerung der Seelen*) of what has already been known, and is distinct from memory" (I, p. 645).

The basic principle of all Platonic philosophy and that on which Brucker's interpretation is founded, concerns theology: "1. Nothing comes from nothing. 2. Two infinite *principia* exist from eternity, opposed to each other, God and matter; from the former all spiritual things originate, from the latter material things".[18] Brucker takes these principles from the *Timaeus*, on the basis of which he excludes the possibility that Plato could have known the Judeo-Christian concept of creation from nothing. Repeating the interpretation given by Johann Christoph Wolf's in the *De Manichaeismo ante Manichaeos* (cf. above, Chapter 5, para 5.4), Brucker maintains that the emanative system was not held by Plato: "This was affirmed in particular by the Neoplatonists (*die jüngere Platonici*), Hierocles, Plotinus, Porphyry, Iamblicus, Proclus and others, who wished to free Plato from the absurdity that existed in the system of two independent principles" (I, p. 661). On this point the Platonic and neoplatonic systems differ sharply and the accusation of Spinozism made against Plato turns out to be inappropriate. God is free and provident, "he can do what he wishes and therefore can also act on matter" (I, p. 652).

---

[17] *Kurtze Fragen*, I, p. 639: "Die Philosophie seye eine Liebe der Weissheit, da die von dem Leib und dessen Banden sich lossmachende Seele sich zu der ächten Wahrheit, und demjenigen, was würcklich ist, und allein mit dem Verstand begrieffen wird, wendet". For a comparison, see the same definition in Albinus: "Philosophy is the desire for knowledge or for the release and separation of the soul from the body; by means of it we turn towards intelligibles and towards beings that truly exist; wisdom is the science of divine and human things", in G. Invernizzi, *Il Didaskalikos di Albino e il medioplatonismo* (Rome, 1976), Vol. II, p. 3.

[18] *Kurtze Fragen*, I, pp. 650–651: "1. Aus nichts werde nichts. 2. Es seyen von Ewigkeit her zwey unendliche einander entgegen gesteze *Principia*, Gott und die Materie, aus jenem kommen alle geistliche, aus diesem alle materielle Dinger her". In the *Historia critica* these two "philosophemes" are repeated: "1. Nothing is created from nothing [. . .] 2. There are therefore two causes of all things, one by which all things exist, the other of which all things consist. The first is God, the other is matter, which as they are opposed to each other are thus eternal and not dependent on each other" (Brucker, I, pp. 676–678).

On several occasions Brucker emphasized the theological aspect and the dualism of Plato's philosophy, to show its detachment from the emanative system that was part of neoplatonism; but he was not able to free himself completely from the neoplatonic framework to interpret other important points of Platonic philosophy, such as the derivation of things from God conceived according to the triadic scheme, and above all, ethics. God's action on matter consists of putting it in order, giving a beginning to our world. For this end, God drew from himself two principles, which are of divine nature but on an inferior level: the mind or idea in which the true essential beings (*die wahrhe wesentliche entia*) of all things are contained, and the soul of the universe from which the souls of men originate. Its world is not eternal, in that it is the result of a free choice on the part of God, who gave order to formless matter by means of ideas (*nach einem gewissen ewigen Urbild, das ist idea*) (I, p. 654).

The area of Platonic philosophy that Brucker liked least was the ethics. After leaving the path indicated by Socrates, ethics had been corrupted by Pythagorean whims and the metaphysical premises of Platonic thought, by which the soul of man is seen as part of the soul of the universe and the highest good comes to consist of a liberation from the body and reunion with God: "The purpose of wisdom is to become like God (*Gott gleich zu werden*) as far as this is granted to human nature" (I, p. 671). Brucker makes the same accusation of "enthusiasm" against Platonic ethics as he was to make against the Neoplatonists.

The chapter on Plato is interesting, even though it does not represent such a radical change in the way of understanding Platonic philosophy, as perhaps Brucker had thought. He was led to study the Platonic texts directly, considering them separately from those of late Platonism, influenced more by theological than philosophical demands and perspectives, and, in particular, under the impetus of the debate over atheism and Spinozism that had involved the Neoplatonists in the search for the sources and antecedents of Spinoza's monism. And indeed, as we have seen, the polemic with the Neoplatonists caused by their incorrect intrepretation of Platonism, is restricted to the field of theology and metaphysics: Brucker opposes neoplatonic monism with Plato's dualism, and their determinism with liberty and divine providence in Plato. At the same time, he emphasizes the eternal nature of matter, in order not to create the picture of a Plato wholly assimilable to Christianity, as many Church Fathers would have him. Brucker's interpretation of Plato does not present any other important novelties; he was, it is true, led to the reading of the Dialogues, but this reading, filtered through the work of Albinus, was oriented towards a systematic view of Platonic philosophy according to the schema of Renaissance Platonism. Brucker acknowledges that Plato frequently changed his mind in the course of the different dialogues (*inconstantiam magnam apud eum inveniri*) (Brucker, I, p. 665), but this declaration does not lead him to consider the possibility of an evolution in Platonic thought.

8.1.5.4. From the methodological point of view, the *Kurtze Fragen* and the *Historia critica* have many aspects in common, just as the author's aim is the same in both. Brucker starts from an awareness of the dearth of philosophical historiography up to his time: Stanley had dealt with the philosophy of the Ancients only, limiting his

work at the most to the Greeks, "following the example of Laertius" ("Vorrede", I, p. [7]); Heumann with his *Acta Philosophorum* had produced only the first elements, the beginnings of a general history of philosophy, but had not brought it to completion, while the summaries of Gentzken and Buddeus were too brief. In order to make up what was lacking, Brucker had two objectives: as well as a didactic purpose, to offer young people the most suitable way of approaching the history of philosophy, he wished to create a work that would be scientifically valid, in order to contribute to the improvement of the discipline (*zur Verbesserung dieser Wissenschaften*) ("Vorrede", I, p. [11]).

In the *Kurtze Fragen* the expository method responds first and foremost to the need for clarity and didactic effectiveness. Brucker proceeds by question and answer as Johann Hübner (1668–1731) had done; from 1711 Hübner was rector of the *Johanneum* gymnasium in Hamburg and his textbooks had proved to be particularly useful for schools, and had been adopted by Francke for the teaching of history and geography at the *Pädagogium* at Halle:[19] "This method is particularly useful in history for young people, who cannot easily understand and remember everything given in an uninterrupted narrative. With the question and answer method, on the other hand, if it is set down and arranged clearly, an excellent aid is provided for the mind and memory, and the young people are able to make progress on their own through repetition" ("Vorrede", I, p. [3]). The questions are put clearly and incisively: "Were there already philosophers before the Flood?" (*Sind vor der Sündfluth auch schon Philosophi gewesen?*) (I, p. 39) is the first question, the reply is negative on the basis of the distinction between philosophy and wisdom, as given in the "Vorbereitung".

The minor philosophers are dealt with in a single question and answer: "Who followed Thales in the Ionic sect? Anaximander, who was the first to open a school of philosophy and who publicly taught wisdom, which he had learnt *privatim* from his master Thales" (I, p. 369). However, the treatment of the great philosophers is much more detailed; it follows the same framework that was to be used again in the chapters of the *Historia critica*: the life, writings, general observations on philosophy, an account of the system by "philosophemes". As an example, here is the list of questions on Plato: "1. Is there another famous disciple of Socrates who founded his own school? 2. When was Plato born and how was he educated? 3. Who were his teachers and whom did he follow in philosophy? 4. How and when did Plato open his own school? 5. What sort of pupils, friends and enemies did he have? 6. What were his character and temperament like? 7. What did he do as well as teach? 8. What did he write? 9. How did Plato die? 10. How can I understand the philosophy of Plato? 11. What is to be observed particularly in the philosophy of Plato? 12. What did he teach on philosophy in general? 13. What did his dialectics contain? 14. What did

[19]Cf. Paulsen, *Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts*, Vol. I, p. 572; Alt, *Jakob Brucker*, p. 67. Among Hübner's textbooks are: *Kurtze Fragen aus der neuen und alten Geographie* (Leipzig, 1722); *Genealogische Tabellen, nebst denen darzu gehörigen genealogischen Fragen, zur Erläuterung der politischen Historie* (Leipzig, 1723).

he teach in *scientia contemplativa*? 15. What was Plato's opinion and teaching on *scientia contemplativa*? 16. What was his teaching on *philosophia activa*?".

The very detailed biographical section has among other things the function of pointing out those circumstances that can clarify the origin of systems; as far as possible, doctrines are taken directly from the writings of the philosophers and set out according to the logical connections of the "system". These are the programmatic premises that Brucker announced in the "Vorrede" to the first volume of the *Kurtze Fragen*: "In the description of the history of philosophers, my main concern has been that the information on them should be, as far as possible, short but complete and clear and told in such a way that their particular character and their circumstances may be known (*eigenen Charactere und Umständen*). [. . .] As for the *Systemata* of their teachings, they are taken from the writings of the philosophers, where such exist; where, on the other hand, they have been lost, the information has been taken from the closest witnesses and, as far as possible, from their own words [. . .]. In particular, I have sought to arrange the teachings in such a way that one conclusion follows on from another, and in my opinion the system should be arranged according to the idea and opinion of the authors (*nach dem Begriff und Meinung ihrer Urheber*)" ("Vorrede", I, pp. 12–14). These methodological rules and this type of procedure was to be used again and carried out in the *Historia critica*, to which we refer the reader for a more detailed analysis and for a comprehensive judgement of the value and the results of the method of Brucker's work.

Returning to the most characteristic aspect of the *Kurtze Fragen*, its use of questions and answers, we note that these are divided into two parts. Brucker first of all replies in the affirmative or the negative, and gives an outline of his position. The thesis is then commented on at length and clarified in the notes with reference to the sources and with an examination of the *status quaestionis* on the various interpretative problems. This is how Brucker indicates the content of the *Anmerckungen*: "Firstly, I have always tried to include the proofs, because without them one cannot judge the truth or certainty of something, especially in historical matters; I have considered this absolutely essential, in order to show the foundation of everything I have affirmed, especially if I have had to distance myself from current opinion, as has often happened to me. Then, it has been my intention, for the sake of those who wish to go further in this type of study and acquire a good foundation for their work on it, to put them in a position where they are able to pursue this elegant and truly useful branch of learned history with correct reflection, diligence, and research. With this in mind, I have first indicated the sources faithfully; from these sources I have taken the details for my reply to the question, so that it is possible to compare and examine the pieces of evidence and recognize the extent of their historical reliability. In the notes more detail is given, with a suggestion of the difficulties and a demonstration of how they can be resolved" ("Vorrede", I, pp. 16–18). The *Anmerckungen* are not therefore a subsidiary, but a fundamental part of the work, which fulfil the purpose of producing something scientifically valid, not merely a reference manual for students.

In the overall structure of the work there is a gap between the short narrative theses and the lengthy and problematic notes which makes the work lack homogeneity

and renders it very long-winded. The author himself acknowledges the difficulty in reading it as early as the preface to the first volume, in which he apologizes to the reader for the wordiness of the *Anmerckungen*, which, contrary to his original intention, had swollen out of all proportion: "When I got as far as Greek philosophy, I was obliged to change my plan a little and to write more fully, since I had found infinite difficulties that had to be resolved and discussed, a good example being the history of the Italic or Pythagorean sect" ("Vorrede", I, pp. 21–22).

This latter aspect, concerning the length of the notes, brings us to a consideration, which naturally concerns the *Historia critica* too, of the breadth and nature of Brucker's scholarship. The texts he consulted ran into hundreds; all available sources were read and weighed up. This work of bibliographical excavation and rescue can be seen as even more impressive in the biographical part where the tiniest details are discussed. It is thus easy to accuse Brucker of excessive erudition or to define his books as "collections of anecdotes". While not denying the presence in his writings of an excessive taste for discovering biographical details, we must nevertheless respect the two-fold purpose of Brucker's research. The first aim was directly associated with his interest in the content of philosophical systems: in order to evaluate them Brucker considered it essential to examine them carefully and objectively, together with all the appropriate critical and bibliographical references and details of the circumstances of the life of the philosophers. But his erudite study had a second purpose, that of freeing the field of history from everything that a rigorous historical and critical examination proved to be unfounded or unlikely. This was the objective of the rationalist historian who had taken Bayle and Heumann's lesson to heart: "On many occasions I have been led to take refuge in historical Pyrrhonism, although it was on a matter that had previously always been accepted, because the law of historical fidelity required caution. Furthermore, I was obliged to eliminate very many myths and unfounded accounts that ancient times and the Middle Ages produced and that have been commonly accepted as Gospel truth". [20] Brucker's aim was to turn the history of philosophy into a science: this work of historical criticism proved to be the first and indispensable step in offering material free from any arbitrary interpolation and founded solely on the certainty of its historical value.

8.1.6. *Auszug aus den Kurtzen Fragen*

8.1.6.1. All of Brucker's philosophical historiography had a didactic purpose, as the author himself acknowledges in the preface ("Gelehrter Leser") to the *Auszug aus den Kurtzen Fragen*: "The desire to offer young students an introduction to

[20] *Kurtze Fragen*, "Vorrede", I, p. [18]: "einmahl bin ich offt genöthiget worden bey vielen Umständen zu einem historichen *Pyrrhonismo* meine Zulflucht zu nehmen, ob man es gleich bissher für eine unstreitige Wahrheit angenommen hat, weil die Gesetze des historischen Glaubens dergleichen Vorsichtigkeit erfordert haben. Und so denn habe ich mich auch bemüssiget befunden, sehr viele Fabeln und ungegründete Mährlein auszumertzen, welche uns die alten und mittlere Zeiten auf den Ermel gebunden, und man gemeiniglich so richtig als ein *Evangelium* gehalten hat".

the science of the history of philosophy (*der Wissenschaft der philosophischen Historie*), which is so important and necessary for them, gave me the idea from the beginning to portray the whole course of the development of the history of philosophy". The question and answer method, as we have seen, had precisely the purpose of making it easier for young people to approach the history of philosophy. But because of its excessive wordiness, the *Kurtze Fragen* had not fully attained this aim, and in order not to discourage students, Brucker accepted the need to reduce the contents of the longer work into a compendium (*Auszug*) which would contain only what was essential for a young student. Various textbooks on the history of philosophy already existed, by Buddeus, Reinhard, and Gentzken, which Brucker appreciated, but there was still no school book written in German that would answer the need for the widest possible spread of the discipline in the context of university studies.

Outwardly, the *Auszug aus den Kurtzen Fragen* faithfully follows the structure and division of the longer work; the headings of the periods, books, and chapters and their sequence are identical. But the historiographical material is spatially divided in a more homogenous way: "Der philosophischen Historie erster Periodus. Von Anfang der Welt biss auf Christi Geburt", pp. 9–197; "Der philosophischen Historie zweyter Periodus. Von Christi Geburt biss auf unsere Zeiten. Erste Haupt-Abtheilung: Von Anfang der Römischen Monarchie biss auf die Zeit der Reformation", pp. 197–405; "Der philosophischen Historie zweyter Periodus, Andere Haupt-Abtheiling: Von der Reformation biss auf unsere Zeiten", pp. 405–648. The compendium concludes with two indices: 1. "Register der Nahmen und Personen", 9 pages; 2. "Register der vornehmsten Materien", 12 pages.

The language is simple and natural, without any quotations in Latin or Greek; there are no notes of the kind that make the *Kurtze Fragen* so discursive and difficult to refer to: "Those who, as frequently happens, do not wish to go into this branch of learning so deeply, will find as much as is sufficient for the person who does not intend to make it his profession but would like to have sufficient understanding of it" ("Vorrede"). Going into the subject at greater depth is left to the discretion of teachers, who can guide the young students to read those parts of the longer work that best suit their tastes and interests.

8.1.7. *Historia critica philosophiae*

8.1.7.1. The *Historia critica* consists of five volumes, to which a sixth was added in the second edition (Leipzig 1766–1767): "Appendix, accessiones, emendationes, illustrationes atque supplementa exhibens". The work was dedicated to George II, King of Great Britain and Duke of Brunswick and Lunenburg, whom the author reminds of the contribution given in the field of philosophy by the genius of the English especially that of Thomas Stanley, in whose footprints he intended to follow (*celeberrimi viri vestigia insistens*) and whose plan he proposed to complete.

Each volume has a "Praefatio"; in the first of these the author briefly presents his method of working and the motives that have led him not to write this work in German like his earlier *Kurtze Fragen*, as he did not intend to produce a simple

translation of the former work. In the other prefaces Brucker takes the opportunity of introducing the subject of each volume, pointing out the questions that had been raised. The first volume is further introduced by a foreword concerned with methodology, on the nature, aims, method, sources, and way of dividing up, the history of philosophy: "Dissertatio praeliminaris de natura, constitutione, usu mediisque historiae philosophicae" (I, pp. 3–45).

The *Historia critica* is sub-divided into three main periods, each comprising two parts; these are divided in turn into various books and then into chapters, sections, and paragraphs. The first period goes from the beginning of the world to the birth of Christ: "Historiae philosophicae periodus prima. A mundi nascentis origine ad initia monarchiae Romanae", and occupies the whole of the first volume, a total of 1357 pages. The two parts of this period correspond to the traditional division of Barbarians and Greeks: "Pars prima. De philosophia Barbarica" (I, pp. 46–363); "Pars secunda. De philosophia Graecorum" (I, pp. 364–1357). Each part is then divided into two books, the first on philosophy before the Flood, from Adam to the descendants of Seth ("De philosophia antediluviana", I, pp. 46–62), the second, on post-diluvian philosophy, deals with the peoples whom the Greeks contemptuously called "Barbarians": "De philosophia Barbarica post diluvium" (I, pp. 63–363). The second part sets out the history of Greek philosophy in two books: the first, on the poets and ancient lawgivers, is presented under the heading of the "infancy" of Greek philosophy: "De infantia philosophiae Graecae" (I, pp. 364–456); the second, obviously much fuller, deals with the philosophy of the sects, first those that originated from Thales, and then those who referred to Pythagoras: "De philosophia Graecorum sectaria" (I, pp. 457–1357).

The second period covers the time from the foundation of the Roman Empire up to the Renaissance: "Historiae philosophicae periodus secunda. Ab initiis monarchiae Romanae ad repurgatas usque literas", and occupies two volumes, a total of 2008 pages. The division is based on the different religions to which the philosophers belonged. The first part explains the philosophy of the pagans, Hebrews, and Arabs ("Pars prima. De philosophia Gentili, Judaica, Saracenica": II, pp. 3–1069; III, pp. 3–240), in three books: the first on Roman philosophy, or rather, on philosophy in the Roman period ("De philosophia Romanorum", III, pp. 3–652) with a full treatment of the neoplatonic school, or "eclectic" school as Brucker calls it (II, pp. 189–462); the second book takes up the history of Hebrew philosophy from the return from Babylon to the modern era ("De philosophia Judaeorum", II, pp. 653–1069); the third, which expounds the history of Islamic philosophy, occupies the first pages of the third volume ("De philosophia Saracenorum", III, pp. 3–240). The second part of this period is wholly devoted to Christian philosophy ("Pars altera historiam philosophiae Christianae ad restauratas usque literas exponens": III, pp. 241–912), in two books, treating respectively ancient Christian philosophy, or Patristics ("De philosophia veterum Christianorum": III, pp. 241–531), and medieval Christian philosophy, or Scholasticism ("De philosophia Christianorum Medii Aevi": III, pp. 532–912).

The third period, corresponding to the fourth part, divided into volumes four and five, comprises the history of modern philosophy, from the Renaissance to the

early eighteenth century: "Historiae criticae philosophiae periodus tertia. A restauratione literarum ad nostra tempora", a total of 1728 pages. In this case the division into parts corresponds less to a temporal criterion and more to the different way of undertaking the reform of philosophy, which in the early days was achieved through a restoration of the ancient schools: "Pars prima. De studio philosophiae emendandae sectario" (IV, pp. 3–785). Here the material is collected into three books, the first describing the attempts made to reform philosophy by the humanists and the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophers of the early Italian Renaissance: "De primis conatibus restituendae philosophiae" (IV, pp. 3–76). The second book shows the recovery of the Greek sects beginning with the Lutheran reform: "De novis laboribus veterem philosophiam revocantium" (IV, pp. 77–535). The third book, finally, is dedicated to the philosophers who chose a new way of doing philosophy but were not eclectics: "De philosophis novam philosophandi viam tentantibus" (IV, pp. 536–785).

The second part of the third period comprises the history of eclectic philosophy: "Pars altera. De studio philosophiae eclecticae post renatas literas", and occupies the whole of the fifth volume. This part is also divided into three books: the first deals, one by one, with the philosophers who tried to bring about an "eclectic" reform of all philosophy (Bruno, Cardano, Francis Bacon, Hobbes, Descartes, Leibniz, Ch. Thomasius): "De restauratoribus philosophiae universae" (V, pp. 3–543). The second treats the reform of philosophy according to its parts (logic, physics, metaphysics, ethics, politics): "De emendatione philosophiae in singulis eius partibus" (V, pp. 544–803). Finally, the third book describes non-European philosophy, referring to those people who at that period aroused the curiosity and admiration of the Europeans (Chinese, Indo-Chinese, Canadians, Japanese): "De philosophia exotica" (V, pp. 804–923).

The sixth volume consists of the "additions and observations" that the author added to the previous five volumes in the second edition. Following the same division into periods, parts, books, and chapters, Brucker indicates the page and line, and quotes in italics the phrase to which each addition or observation refers. In all, there are 1032 pages in this supplement, bringing the total in the *Historia critica* to over 6000 quarto pages. Some space is given to the history of the life of Wolff ("Mantissa ad historiam Christiani Wolfii", VI, pp. 878–902), which had been outlined only in the previous edition, since Wolff was still alive at the time and the controversy over his ideas had not completely died down. The appendix concludes with a "Tabula mnemonica historiae philosophicae secundum elegantissimum ordinem Ch. Bruckeri in usum studiosae iuventutis adornata a I.C.B." (VI, pp. 1013–1032).

Unlike the *Kurtze Fragen*, in which the notes are disproportionately long in relation to the text, in the *Historia critica* they are placed at the foot of the page and simply give the title, often abbreviated, of the works cited. The passages taken from other authors, whether ancient or modern, are quoted in the text in italics to distinguish them more easily from Brucker's commentary; the texts in modern languages are given in Latin translation, while those from Greek are given with the original text too. At the end of each volume there are "Supplementa et adnotationes" or "Addenda

et emendanda", followed by two indices: 1. "Index personarum et nominum" and 2. "Index rerum et materiarum", occupying a total of 175 pages in the six volumes.

8.1.7.2. Brucker devotes the final section of the "Dissertatio praeliminaris" to periodization: "Ordo et divisio historiae philosophicae" (I, pp. 38–45). He begins by indicating the reasons for this interest: "we recommend this introduction to all those who wish to explore thoroughly the vast regions of the history of philosophy. Since these regions are so many and so extensive we need to find an order in which to travel through the history of every time and people, and an order in which we can investigate all the topics relative to it. In this way we shall find a remedy for confusion, we shall aid the memory worthily and we shall appreciate more precisely and more authentically the characteristics of each type of philosophy. There is no better order than that founded on the notions to which our intellect is accustomed and which sets everything in its time and place" (I, pp. 38–39). First of all, the division answers the need for clarity, it serves to avoid confusion and to aid the memory; but it is also a tool to arrive at a better and deeper understanding of the philosophies of the past, which depend, as we have seen, on the *circumstantiae auctorum*, are influenced by other teachings, and reflect the particular conditions of their times.

With the *Historia critica*, the division of the history of philosophy into three periods is more definitive: "For in this way the history of philosophy can be divided into ancient, medieval and modern and, as a great help to memory, can assign to each of them the temporal, ethnic, and geographical moments that are proper to them" (I, p. 39). The first period comprises the origins of philosophy up to its most complete development among the Greeks, and extends from the beginnings of humanity to the establishment of the Roman Empire, while the second goes from the birth of Christ to the end of the Middle Ages, and the third from the Protestant Reformation to the early eighteenth century. The events that have profoundly changed the course of history are the birth of Christ and the Protestant Reformation, according to the criterion of classification of ecclesiastical history used by the Lutherans, who had added a third period to the Augustinian schema, beginning with the reform of religion. In this Brucker followed Heumann, who had seen the Reform as a moment of fracture with respect to philosophy's past as represented by Scholasticism; on the other hand, he differed by dating the first period back to before the Flood (*philosophia antediluviana*), while Heumann had maintained that it was impossible to go back further than that event because of the complete absence of historical documents. In the *Historia critica*, the history of philosophy has the maximum chronological range, beginning, literally, with the first man to appear on earth (*Adamus an perfectus philosophus*?) and going up to contemporary philosophy (Locke, Leibniz, Ch. Thomasius).

Each period then contains a very detailed internal division, which complies with a number of criteria. For example, there is in the first place an intermediate parallel division: the first period consists of two parts, first philosophy among the Barbarian peoples and then philosophy among the Greeks; the second period is divided into non-Christian philosophy (pagan, Hebrew, and Muslim) and philosophy of the Christians (Patristic and Scholastic); the third and final period is divided

into the reform of philosophy through the sects and reform through eclecticism. In this first division within the periods the temporal sequence gives way to a classification of a spatial type, according to areas of thought, defined by ethnico-geographical criteria or by the various religious confessions that the philosophers belonged to, or by the difference in the philosophical methods adopted.

Within each part the periodization then continues chronologically: Barbarian philosophy is divided into ante-diluvian and postdiluvian, Greek into "infancy" or philosophy of the poets, and "maturity" or philosophy of the sects. Before the Flood there was no true philosophical speculation; nevertheless, Brucker wonders "what ante-diluvian philosophy was like" and looks at the important figures of the Old Testament (Adam, Cain, Abel, Seth, Enoch). After the Flood, and following the dispersion of the peoples to the different continents, barbarian philosophy spread to four geographical areas: the East (Hebrews, Chaldeans, Persians, Indians, Arabs, and Phoenicians), the South (Egyptians and Ethiopians), the West (Gauls, Britons, Germans, Ancient Romans), and the North (Scythians, Thracians and Getae).

In the detailed division of Greek philosophy, Brucker adopts Laertius's model of the succession and derivation of the schools; he does not make use of the division (suggested by the *Acta philosophorum*) of Greek philosophy in its various directions of thought determined conceptually on the basis of the particular characteristics of the object or method of research (sectarian-eclectic, dogmatic-sceptic, physico-moralist). Heumann's suggestion is abandoned, although Brucker was undoubtedly familiar with his form of periodization, as can be seen by his use of "infancy" to describe Greek philosophy of the period of the poets and lawgivers. This first phase of Greek thought also turns out to be similar in form and method to that of the Barbarians (*Barbaricae valde similis empirica magis fuit et simplex, quam artificialis*: I, p. 40). Its representatives were the ancient poets (Linus, Orpheus, Musaeus, Pherecydes, Hesiod, Epimenides, Homer) and the first lawgivers (Zaleucus, Charondas, Draco, Solon, Lycurgus, Minos, and the Seven Wise Men).

In a second period philosophy, favoured by the political conditions of freedom that were lacking in the monarchical regimes of the East, acquired a more mature aspect, attaining the form of scientific knowledge: "When philosophy began to grow, it developed quickly and became more mature, attaining a more scientific form (*virilior magis, et scientiae habitu conformior facta est*), until it finally arrived among the Greeks who, as they lived in a freer way and not under the servitude of a monarchical regime, spread philosophy, which up to that time had been counted among the mysteries, and making use of the powers of their own intelligence raised up true systems of philosophy" (I, p. 39). Scientific or "artificial" philosophy developed within the sects, which Brucker grouped into the two traditional currents of the Ionics and the Italics, according to whether they derived from Thales or Pythagoras: "There are two sources from which, in Greece and in the other regions where Greek was spoken, all philosophy had its origin, and from which the particular kinds of philosophizing arose which are usually called sects, given that they followed the method of a single philosopher and rejected all the others" (I, p. 457).

By the almost unanimous testimony of the ancient writers (Apuleius, Cicero, Strabo), Thales was considered not only to be the founder of the Ionic school,

which continued with Anaximander and went up to the time of Anaxagoras and Archelaus, but was also the first to research philosophy in an "artificial" way, connected with the discovery of the causes of natural phenomena. Socrates, a disciple of Archelaus, who "brought philosophy from heaven to earth", gave most importance to ethics, bringing about a profound transformation in philosophical research. From the Socratic school, "as from the Trojan horse" came a multitude of other sects (the Cyrenaics, the school of Elis, the Megarians, Academics, Aristotelians, Cynics, and Stoics) who modified their master's teaching in different ways. The other source of Greek philosophy was Pythagoras: "Just as the whole band of the Socratics (*tota Socraticorum cohors*) came from the Ionic sect, so the Italic sect gave birth to the Eleatic, Heraclitan, Epicurean, and Pyrrhonian sects" (I, p. 982). The Eleatics included not only Parmenides, Zeno, and Melissus, but also, according to historiographical tradition, the atomists Leucippus and Democritus. In order to show the difference between the two directions of the Eleatic school, Brucker calls the former "metaphysicists" and the latter "physicists". [21]

The second period covers about fifteen centuries, from the death of Christ to the end of Scholasticism. As we have seen, the account follows the various religious areas: firstly pagan philosophy in the Roman era, then Hebrew and Arab philosophy, and finally the philosophy that flourished among the Christians. As to the Romans, Brucker emphasized their slowness in adhering to philosophy; this was caused by the diffidence of the senatorial class, who feared that contact with the excessively free thinking ideas of the Greeks would corrupt morals. Philosophy came to Rome only in the first century B.C., when the Republic was in the process of turning into the Empire (*invalescente potentiorum tyrannide philosophari coeperunt Romanorum ingenia*: I, p. 42). Just as political freedom was the factor that stimulated the progress of philosophy in Greece, so the lack of it prevented the Romans from working out an original and fruitful way of thought, in spite of the protection of the emperors who often acted as promoters of philosophical study. Thus the Greek sects came back to settle in Rome, in particular the Pythagorean school (Quintus Sextius, Sotion of Alexandria, Apollonius of Tyana), the Platonic (Thrasyllus, Alcinous [i.e. Albinus of Smyrna], Apuleius, Numenius of Apamea), the Peripatetic (Alexander of Aphrodisias, Themistius, Olympiodorus, Simplicius), the Cynic (Demetrius, Peregrinus), the Stoic (Annaeus Cornutus, Seneca, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus), the Epicurean (Celsus, Pliny the Elder, Lucian of Samosata, Diogenes Laertius), and the Sceptic (Sextus Empiricus). But towards the third century A.D. a new school was born: this was the "eclectic" sect (from Ammonius Saccas and Plotinus to Proclus), which progressively stifled all the others because of its dominant syncretist and conciliatory demands.

Brucker then goes back in time to follow the evolution of Hebrew philosophy, from the return from the Babylonian captivity up to the end of the Middle

[21] Brucker, I, p. 1143: "Sed et ipsa Eleatica secta inter se distinguenda est, inque duas classes separanda, quarum illa metaphysice magis, haec physice de rerum natura disseruit, utraque sibi in multis e diametro adversa".

Ages. An early phase of indifference towards Greek thought was followed, after the Macedonian conquest and through the work of the active Jewish colony in Alexandria, by an encounter with Greek culture which gave rise to the sects of the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Essenes, on the model of the Pythagorean, Stoic, and Epicurean schools. After the fall of Jerusalem and the diaspora "almost all the lights of reason that had shone up to that time" (II, p. 813) were extinguished among the Jews. They subsequently developed the study of their own traditions (the Talmud), but this was very soon contaminated by Alexandrine and neoplatonist thought, from which the Cabbala was born. Finally, towards the 10th century, when "Aristotle began to raise his head among the Arabs and Christians", Jewish philosophical culture also became peripatetic (Ibn Esra, Maimonides).

Christian philosophy is divided into two sections; the first comprises Patristic philosophy and goes up to the sixth century, while the second reaches its high point with the treatment of Scholasticism. The birth of the neoplatonic school in the third century constitutes a break between the first phase of Patristics, from Justin to Clement of Alexandria, still hostile to Greek speculation, and the second from Origen to Pseudo-Dionysius, who introduced many Platonic and neoplatonic elements into Christianity: "When the eclectic method of philosophy (*eclecticum philosophandi genus*) became strong, the doors were opened to it and great honour and value were attributed to it" (I, p. 42).

During the centuries of the high Middle Ages, following the barbarian invasions that put an end to the cultural exchanges between East and West, "that unfortunate night (*infelix illa nox*) arrived in which all letters were nearly extinguished and every genuine form of learning was buried under the terrible darkness of ignorance and barbarism (*et quicquid genuinam eruditionem sapiebat, horrendis ignorantiae et barbariei tenebris sepultum est*)" (I, pp. 42–43). In the eleventh century a new group of philosophers, called the Scholastics, appeared; by swearing on the word of Aristotle, they corrupted philosophy as well as theology, "and, incapable of cultivating people's intellects, they kept their minds in a state of slavery with an unhealthy philosophical method" (I, p. 43). Following the framework adopted by Adam Tribbechow and Jakob Thomasius, Brucker divides Scholasticism into three periods, characterised by its increasing ability to absorb and to be influenced by Aristotelian thought: from Peter Lombard to Albertus Magnus, from Albertus to Durandus of Saint-Pourçain, and from the latter to the time of the Lutheran reform: "In these three periods Scholasticism received three important additions and thus penetrated more deeply into the sanctuary of theology, in such a way that, according to the opinion of [Jakob] Thomasius, early [Scholasticism] led Aristotle to the threshold of theology, middle Scholasticism to the entrance, and later Scholasticism outdid the first two in audacity with its declarations founded on the authority of the master Aristotle and also on the mysteries, which had not been done in early and middle Scholasticism" (III, p. 731).

The third period, "from the restoration of letters to our times", covers the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. After the first, still uncertain, attempts to renew philosophy carried out in opposition to Scholasticism by Cusanus, Marsilio Ficino, Ioannes Bessarion and Trapezuntius, and following the Lutheran movement

for the reform of religion, philosophy also made a new leap forward in the search for a new way of philosophizing. In distinguishing the various aspects of modern thought, Brucker follows Buddeus's *Compendium*, which had contrasted the reform of philosophy according to the eclectic method with other tendencies that had not known how to adopt a correct philosophical attitude at the same time as they rejected Scholasticism. A first group of thinkers restored the ancient Greek schools: the Pythagorean-Platonic-Cabbalistic (Reuchlin, Cornelius Agrippa), the Aristotelian (Pomponazzi, Agostino Nifo, Zabarella, Piccolomini among the Catholics; Melanchthon, Simon Simonius, Michael Piccart, Conringius, Christian Dreier, Jakob Thomasius among the Protestants), the Parmenidean (Telesio), the Ionic (Claude de Bérigard), the Stoic (Lipsius), and the Democrito-Epicurean (Gassendi). Others rejected the philosophy of Scholasticism but were not yet ready to go down the main road of eclecticism: the Sceptics (Francisco Sánchez, La Mothe Le Vayer, Pierre-Daniel Huet), the Mosaic philosophers (Thomas Burnet, Comenius), the theosophists (Theophrastus Paracelsus, Robert Fludd, Böhme), and the syncretists (Guillaume Postel, Du Hamel, Johann Christoph Sturm); finally there were others who rejected philosophy in every form, such as the Helmstädt professor Daniel Hoffmann (1538–1611).

Finally, in the seventeenth century, philosophers chose the eclectic method, "which, as it does not swear on the words of the masters, chooses out of all things that which is proven to the highest degree, and discovers the truth by means of accurate rational reflection on the very nature of things" (I, p. 44). After Bacon, with Descartes, Leibniz, Christian Thomasius, and the thinkers of the early eighteenth century, philosophy made as much progress "as it had done in many thousands of years" (I, p. 44). Brucker concludes by extending this survey to non-European philosophy, with particular attention to the Chinese: "hence our account will include in an appendix some discussion of exotic philosophy, especially that of the Chinese, which has aroused so much interest in recent times" (I, p. 44). As the controversy provoked in Germany by Wolff's *Oratio de Sinarum philosophia* had abated, it was now possible for Brucker to dampen the excessive admiration for the Chinese by comparing their philosophy – to a great extent imperfect with, for example, no reference at all to the art of reason – and European philosophy, which had now reached a maturity of expression, "so that there is no doubt that we prefer one Leibniz to a thousand Confuciuses" (V, p. 881).

The historiographical framework proposed by Brucker commands respect first of all for its grand scale and completeness: no manifestation of thought, even that furthest from the philosophical spirit of his time, such as "Adamitic wisdom", and even that most alien to the Western cultural tradition, such as the ideas of the primitive population of America, escapes Brucker's inquiring gaze and curiosity. But the complexity of the elements examined is reduced to a framework that clarifies the links between them and makes them easier to understand. Each philosopher occupies a place in the history of philosophy, a place assigned according to his country of origin and the school to which he belonged. As well as this ordering function, the periodization fulfils the need to focus the themes of each current of thought in a more appropriate way. Thus the placing of the Epicurean school in the context of the

Italic current after Eleaticism, justifies not only the revival of the atomist system but, above all, the anti-metaphysical tendency that had already developed in the second phase of life of the Eleatic school in opposition to the philosophy of Parmenides and of Zeno. Neoplatonic thought shows all of its detachment from original Platonism if its themes are set in the context of Roman philosophy and placed in conflict with the development of Christianity.

The aim of the periodization is, as we have seen, to achieve the greatest narrative clarity, but this result is not reached by proposing a division of the historiographical material that is totally new and removed from the schemas used by earlier historians. Brucker did not wish to innovate too much as this could cause confusion: he collects the various attempts made from the historiographical tradition, from ancient (Diogenes Laertius) to modern (Horn, Stanley, Vossius, Jakob Thomasius), and up to his own time (Buddeus, Heumann), and unites them to form a unitary whole, taking care to put everything in its place and time (*suo loco et tempori*). The internal criteria Brucker uses are also heterogenous: chronology and geography make, as he had declared in the *Kurtze Fragen*, the main contribution to periodization; but sometimes he turns to conceptual distinctions, as in the division of modern philosophy, which reflects the various "forms" in which philosophical speculation had manifested itself after the Renaissance, while leaving out the time and place in which each thinker had lived.

The importance of the didactic concern, which leads Brucker to look for points of reference that are easy to recognize and learn, should not make us forget his purpose of demonstrating the effective progress and advance of philosophy by means of an appropriate division of the material. This plan is shown clearly in the division of Greek philosophy into "infancy" and "maturity", which correspond to the two moments of "empirical" and "scientific" philosophy, but above all in the last part, which concludes with an account of eclectic philosophy, which achieved its greatest development in Brucker's time.

8.1.7.3. The *Historia critica philosophia* opens with an outline of "Barbarian" philosophy, including all the forms of thought that preceded Greek speculation; it starts with the beginning of the world (*a mundi incunabulis*), showing the same extension as the "universal histories" that had, with Horn, passed into philosophical historiography. But apart from the external framework, which remains the same, there is a profound change in the spirit in which Brucker approaches this first part of the history of philosophy. Like Heumann, Brucker was inspired by the idea of showing the groundless nature of the opinion that attributed authentic philosophical thought to the Eastern peoples and even to Adam and the ancient prophets.

The idea of the "Barbarian" origin of philosophy went back to the Church Fathers (Clement of Alexandria), who, "gripped by admiration for Platonic theology", sought its beginnings among the peoples who lived on the borders of Palestine, in order to prove its similarity to the Hebrew concept of the divinity and hence its closeness to Christianity. This prejudice had up to his time been an obstacle to the resolution of the problem of the origin of philosophy, which should be put in terms of the meaning that comes from its definition, not on the basis of its presumed

superiority and anticipation of a later theory: "If the true definition of philosophy had been used as a rule; if a distinction had been made between erudition and a knowledge of things different from popular knowledge on one hand, and philosophy on the other; if the beginnings of philosophizing had been separated from its progress and from its donning of formal dress; if the way of handing down wisdom through the authority of the father or the master had been distinguished from rigorous philosophical method and from the thinking that seeks the causes and principles of all things, all controversy would easily have vanished into logomachia". [22]

Philosophy, in its correct sense as the "science that expounds the principles and rules of truth both divine and human" (I, p. 7), began with the Greeks, among whom it was to acquire the aspect of a true science; in spite of this, it is possible to find among the Barbarian peoples the beginnings, in a simple and not yet scientific form (*simplici potius cognitione quam scientifica*), of all the arts and sciences and hence also of philosophy. Brucker's conclusion is on the same line as Heumann's: "One may rightly seek the origins of almost all the disciplines and also of philosophy among the Barbarian peoples; but it is not easy to find the correct method of philosophizing before the Greeks (*rectam tamen philosophandi rationem*), which consists of reflection and reasoning" (I, p. 50).

The first part of the *Historia critica*, on ante-diluvian philosophy, is typical of this cautious attitude. In polemic with Deslandes, who had considered Adam as a representative of "natural philosophy", Brucker mentions the distinction between simple wisdom and scientific knowledge, to show that Adam cannot be regarded as a philosopher: "Thus the author [Deslandes] confuses the way of thinking of our own time (*temporum nostrorum rationem*) with the very early condition of the human race, and mixes a knowledge of the works of nature of an empirical sort with philosophical science" (I, p. 57). In the same way, the ancient patriarchs – although they were among the wisest men of antiquity, since they enjoyed the twofold guide of revelation and reason – were not true philosophers: "unless one wishes to extend this term to every kind of learning, knowledge, and experience, and to number among the philosophers all those who have led a prudent life and developed their minds in a simple way (*et ingenium sine arte excolunt*)" (I, pp. 65–66).

Brucker's negative view of Barbarian philosophy is cleary seen in the long chapter on the Chaldeans (I, pp. 102–142). This nation, so highly praised by earlier historians of philosophy, was superstitious, and their presumed wise men were in reality priests of a corrupt and false religion ("Chaldaeorum philosophia quae fuerit? Religio vel potius superstitio", I, p. 106). They put all their efforts into the art of divination from the stars (*divinatio ex sideribus*), by which they obtained the protection of the king and the veneration of the people. Chaldean philosophy, just like the rest

[22] Brucker, I, p. 49: "Quod si enim philosophiae propria significatio pro norma fuisset adhibita, si distinctum fuisset, inter eruditionem et cognitionem rerum a vulgo diversam, et inter philosophiam, si philosophandi initia ab incrementis et formali habitu fuissent separata, si modus tradendi sapientiam per auctoritatem parentis et magistri a philosophandi methodo accurata et meditatione cuncta per causas et principia sua inquirente fuisset segregatus, facile tota controversia in *logomachian* abitura evanuisset".

of Eastern speculation, displays two characteristics that are opposed to the nature of authentic philosophizing. Firstly, they did not make use of reason but based their principles on tradition: "the philosophy of the Chaldeans consisted not in free and careful examination, based on the principles of reason, of divine and human things, but in the simple handing down of the traditions received from their parents to their descendants, who accepted with the greatest respect the teachings of their elders" (I, p. 110). Apart from this method, extraneous to the nature of philosophizing, which on the contrary consists of "giving the reasons (*rationes reddere*) on which the certainty of its declaration stands" (I, p. 111), they made use of symbolic language to reveal their teachings only to the initiated or to the exponents of their sect. "From what we have said at some length it is obvious that the wise men of the Chaldeans were rightly excluded from the ranks of the philosophers by those who know the true value of philosophy. The type of learning that flourished among them and that we recognize as conforming to the spirit of that time and to that nation, is very similar to the corrupting superstition of every religion and to the vain learning that aims at deception" (I, p. 112).

Brucker's interpretation of Barbarian philosophy is characterized by a radical denial of its philosophical relevance; from this follows also the denial that it is possible to find in it the premises of Greek speculation, as the historiographical procedure typical of the previous century had done, a tendency which can still be identified in Buddeus. It was commonly thought that the inventor of atoms was a certain Mochus, a Phoenician philosopher whom some, such as Huet, identified directly with Moses. This theory was supported in particular by Cudworth in *The True Intellectual System of the Universe* (London, 1678), which enjoyed great success throughout the eighteenth century and which was translated and commented on by Moshemius in Germany (Jena, 1733). Brucker questioned the value of Cudworth's evidence in the first place, but above all he dwelt on the argument taken from the nature of Barbarian philosophy, "simple and empirical wisdom", incapable therefore of raising itself to the *rationes*, to the first principles of things, as the intelligence of the Greeks was later to do. [23]

Although not denying all contact between the Barbarians and Greeks, given that there were frequent commercial and cultural exchanges, particularly by way of the colonies in Asia Minor (Miletus), Brucker remains faithful to the idea that to a large extent philosophy originated with the Greeks, as Heumann maintained: "while they adopted some learning from the Barbarians, once they [the Greeks] began to philosophize with their own intelligence and in correct ways, they eventually reached the true foundations of philosophy; in this they were helped by the freedom of the Greek people and by their innate curiosity, while the same form of government (that in Greece) favoured this freedom, which among the Barbarians on the contrary was

[23] Brucker, I, p. 232: "Quod vero imprimis probe ponderandum putamus, et Posidonii fidem suspectam facit, illud est, quod modus philosophandi per hypotheses et principiorum systemata, quem ab introductis atomis philosophi secuti sunt, indoli philosophiae Barbaricae, quae tota traditiva simplex nudisque assertis constans fuit, adversa sit, et aperte ingenium Graecanicum sapiat".

suppressed by the condition of slavery of the people and the authority of the priests" (I, p. 365). The ancient Greeks did indeed borrow from the East the first elements and rudiments of the sciences and the arts, but then developed these branches of knowledge autonomously through their search for the philosophical foundations. The conditions of political freedom, the indispensable guarantee of the autonomy of rational research, were fulfilled in Greece, while they were absent in the monarchical and tyrannical regimes of the East.

The period in which philosophy emerged coincided with the birth of the Ionic sect through the work of Thales and of the Italic sect through Pythagoras; it was the era "in which human intelligence (*ingenium humanum*) began to philosophize in a correct way (*justo habitu*) and to be interested in thinking and reasoning on the truth of divine and human things" (I, p. 457). The Ionic school developed from Thales to Anaxagoras and Archelaus, and was concerned almost exclusively with physical and natural questions, using a method that was undoubtedly superior to that of the Eastern thinkers, but it was still imperfect and cannot be compared with current scientific method. Thus Thales's affirmation that water is the principle of all things proved to have little foundation, and Brucker puts forward the hypothesis that he had been led to it "by tradition rather than by reasoning" (I, p. 467); the homoeomeries of Anaxagoras are revealed to our eyes to be contrary "both to reason and to experience" (I, p. 502).

The philosophy of Socrates represents an effective step forward: as it is said, he brought philosophy "from heaven to earth", for the first time directing research towards questions of man and civil society. "Seeing that the philosophers inquired into celestial things and despised the things that concerned them and were before their eyes, in such a way that the human will was not improved nor was the happiness of the human spirit promoted, but instead time was wasted in useless speculation, he brought philosophy down from heaven to earth and began to philosophize about things that concern the human mind, civil society and the customs of men, through which the happiness of mortals is truly promoted" (I, p. 522). He made use of a new method, consisting of irony and induction, through which he showed up the empty wisdom of the physicists and sophists and prepared the mind for the study of the truth. The figure of Socrates, outlined according to Xenophon's account, is given very special importance. Brucker praised the consistency of the man who lived and died without ever renouncing the principles in which he believed; he is the model of the true philosopher (*exemplum viri vere sapientis*), almost a prefiguration of the Enlightenment philosopher, who by the power of reason was able to overcome popular prejudices and guide speculation towards research into true individual and social happiness.

The schools that recalled the teaching of Socrates were wrong in corrupting the master's method with dialectical hair-splitting and metaphysical subtleties. The lack of system in Platonic thought is interpreted as a sign of uncertainty in Plato's method, since he was incapable of demonstrating the teachings that he maintained with rational foundations. The whole history of the Academy and Platonism, with their varied and contrasting positions, bears witness to the lack of clarity and consistency in Plato's philosophy.

In his presentation of Aristotle, Brucker was wary of being influenced by the condemnation and rejection of the Stagirite pronounced by many German philosophers of the early eighteenth century, some of whom, such as Buddeus and Syrbius, had been his teachers. He had also been present in Germany when some points of Peripatetic thought had been rehabilitated by Leibniz and Wolff, and Heumann, in the *Acta philosophorum*, had given a full eulogy of Aristotelian philosophy, praised precisely in opposition to the lack of consistency and system in Plato's. Brucker felt that a more serene and balanced examination of Peripatetic thought was opportune, in order not to repeat the error of those who identified philosophizing with criticism of Aristotle: "they believe that it is not possible to philosophize correctly if not by attacking furiously the whole of Aristotle and everything that bears his name" (I, p. 805). But despite the propositions he made, Brucker's interpretation repeated the commonplaces of the anti-Aristotelian polemic as set out by Ch. Thomasius and his school.

The first accusation was that he founded a school of his own: "[. . .] the purpose of Aristotle's philosophy was to raise himself above all of the philosophers and to become the creator of a new sect, founding a new system of teaching different from that of the other philosophers" (I, p. 803). In order to seem original, he had stuffed his philosophy with verbal subtleties, with a mental exercise taken to extremes but without an encounter with experience or the real nature of things. Physics offers an example of this: after rejecting, out of a desire for novelty, the method "of examining matter through the tiniest particles [viz. Atoms]", and, at the same time, the separate ideas of Plato, Aristotle took up these ideas again, and with them explained the causes of natural phenomena. "Since he considered ideas existing *per se* to be idle chatter and worthless rubbish, and instead sought the nature of things in species and forms, he thus slipped towards principles of physics no better than those of Plato; he corrupted the whole science of natural things and offered us principles unworthy of the name, given that, as they were neither clear nor existed save in mental abstractions expressed with vague ideas and empty words, they concealed the nature of things instead of revealing it" (I, p. 804).

The second characteristic of Aristotelianism that Brucker points out is obscurity. The circumstances in which Aristotle's writings have come down to us has certainly contributed to this, but there is also an internal cause, that is, his use of new terms for notions that were as yet not at all clear in his mind. This is the case of the concept of the soul, into which, in order to show his independence from Plato, Aristotle introduced the term *entelechy*, a substance that enjoys the perfection of being a form of the organic body, a new and high-sounding term for an obscure and vague form. The uncertainty in this notion bears witness to Aristotle's contradictory thinking on the question of the immortality of the soul. However, Brucker judges that Averroes's interpretation of the denial of the immortality of the individual soul was more in keeping with the whole of the Aristotelian system, which had a naturalistic and immanentist character: "On these bases the spirit of man as such must of necessity be called mortal. In fact, even if the mind is immortal, given that the universal spirit does not die, yet it is separated from the man who dies in whom it has been imprinted and inserted, and having first formed the rational spirit in union with the imagination

and now distancing itself from that to which it had offered assistance, it abandons the mortal spirit of man; and thus the spirit of man, in as much as it is his own spirit, is mortal" (I, p. 826). Brucker repeats the accusation of godlessness and atheism made against Aristotle, also referring to his concept of the divinity: "The Aristotelian God cannot be either immense or omnipresent, given that, as he is linked to the furthest sphere, he acts separately from the parts of the world, merely idly contemplating himself; thus he cannot, nor does he wish, to be honoured with prayers nor placated with sacrifices, nor can he punish sins or help the good; he is much worse than the God of Epicurus who was at least to be venerated for his excellence" (I, p. 834).

The Stoic system proved to be even more godless; in it Brucker sees a prefiguration of the monism of Spinoza: "[Zeno] did not place God externally above matter, but he mixed him with matter internally and inserted him into it, joining him with matter so closely that he acts according to the necessary link of nature; and thus the soul of the universe does not so much depend on God but is God himself" (I, p. 906). He repeats to the letter the interpretation of Buddeus, who placed the physical teaching at the summit of the Stoic system and noted the inconsistency between the high and noble affirmations of the ethics and the materialism of the system.

Among the schools of the Pythagorean current, Brucker devotes most space to the Eleatics and Epicureans. He distinguishes between two groups of philosophers within Eleatism where the historiographical tradition placed systems as diverse as those of Parmenides and Democritus, precisely in order to acknowledge this diversity: 1. the Metaphysicists (Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno, Melissus); and 2. the Physicists (Leucippus, Democritus, Protagoras, Diagoras, Anaxarchus). Historically and logically the latter derive from the former. Setting aside the metaphysics of Parmenides, which had arrived at conclusions that on the physical level were contrary to the most evident experience of the senses, Leucippus and Democritus decided to reform the Eleatic system so that it would respond better to the nature of things and the senses (I, p. 1172). They created a theory of atoms, particles of matter diverse in quantity but not in quality, with which they were able to offer an explanation of bodies and their actions which was more plausible than those that had been thought up so far using numbers, qualities, and elementary forms: "Once they had dared to approach the venerable threshold of nature more closely, abandoning numbers, proportions, harmonies, ideas, qualities, and elementary forms, and things of this sort that had been the refuge of ignorance used up to then by physicists, they [the Epicureans] turned their attention to actual bodies, examining their conditions and their physical and mechanical nature, their movement, their appearance, the arrangement of their parts, their consistency, and similar things; from all of this they evaluated the properties of each thing, defined their actions and explained their effects, thus restoring the agreement between reason and sense which had until that moment been denied by the Eleatics" (I, p. 1172).

Although they had abandoned the metaphysical system of the Eleatics, the atomists tried to make their physical theory conform with it, "so that they would not seem to have distanced themselves too far from the Eleatic system". Atoms correspond to being, vacuum corresponds to non-being: "they themselves admitted only one being, that is to say atoms, placing the void among the non-being, which the Eleatics

had at first rejected. They reckoned that atoms were different in appearance, place, and order, and maintained that these were the only modifications of matter. Since they derived the form of all things from the infinite variation of its appearance, place, position, and the union [of atoms], it was easy for them to strengthen with new arguments the Eleatic theory of the uncertainty of sensible knowledge, which Democritus did with great ostentation, as we shall show later on" (I, p. 1174).

Parallel to this appraisal of the speculative and scientific value of atomism, the *Historia critica* goes on to re-consider the figure and the philosophy of Epicurus, a process which had begum in the Renaissance period and reached its highest point with Gassendi. According to Brucker, Epicurus had the merit of bringing the theme of happiness to the foreground in philosophical research, as Socrates had done, reacting against the abstract and pointless arguments of the dialecticians: "he adopted the nature of man as a guide in ethics, and in physics, reason and the experience of senses" (I, p. 1253), in opposition to the sceptical conclusion of the second Academy and the metaphysical abstractions of Aristotle and the Stoics. The theological warnings, so much in evidence in other parts of the *Historia critica*, almost disappear with regard to Epicurean philosophy. The purpose of this philosophy is not carnal pleasure, as the Stoics had asserted and as the Church Fathers had maintained, but the pleasure of learning; Epicurus acknowledged the existence of the gods, but denied providence in order to safeguard man's freedom, impossible in the Stoic system: "Since the Stoics deprived both God and men of freedom with this physical necessity, and meanly corrupted Providence, which they exalted in words, in order to avoid this absurd doctrine, Epicurus rejected this necessity to the point not only of excluding Providence from his system but also of denying the necessity of the movement of atoms that Democritus had established" (I, p. 1253).

Moving on to speak of Roman philosophy, Brucker first of all notes that it derived from the Greeks and from the East, since the Romans had not managed to produce an original system of thought: in fact, they considered that the Greeks had reached perfection in the field of philosophy and so it was enough to follow their doctrines (II, p. 47). Therefore the Greek schools continued, even though the fundamental characteristic of the period, which coincided with the centuries of the Roman Empire, was the harmonization of the various sects, giving the syncretism of "eclectic", or neoplatonic, sect. Brucker reminds us that the school had originated in Egypt, where religious syncretism had long reigned ("the Egyptians, a people deeply given to supersitition and to the worship of the gods, tended to welcome any kind of dogma from the religions spread all over the universe": I, p. 191), and he underlines the fundamental characteristic of neoplatonism, which, while it has a substantially Pythagorean and Platonic core, seeks to reconcile the different sects, in particular those of Plato and Aristotle.[24] Thus the epithet "eclectic" which

[24]Brucker's guide in his treatment of neoplatonism is a significantly-titled dissertation by L. Mosheim (Moshemius), inserted in the second volume of the previously-mentioned Latin translation of *The True Intellectual System of the Universe*: L. Moshemius, *De turbata per recentiores Platonicos ecclesia*, in R. Cudworth, *Systema intellectuale huius universi seu de veris naturae rerum originibus* (Jena, 1733; Leyden, 1773), Vol. II, pp. 747–808. Other works by Johann Lorenz

Olearius gave the neoplatonic school is incorrect: "This was the only purpose of the study the Platonists made of Aristotelian philosophy; they followed Aristotle in particular in dialectics, as is proved by the example of Porphyry, Ammonius, Plutarch, Olympiodorus, Themistius, Proclus, Simplicius, and others. In physical science they reconciled him with Plato, producing an extraordinary catastrophe of opinions and doctrines with which they sought to eliminate mechanically the disagreement between the two philosophers. Among the many examples a clear one is provided by the dogma of the eternal generation of the world in the divine mind: Plato, who declared that the world was generated, is forcibly made to agree with Aristotle, who supported the idea of the eternity of the world, although in this way the judgement and opinion of both of them is grievously corrupted" (II, p. 362).

Brucker emphasizes the difference and the distance from the original Platonic system. While Plato had established intuition of the intelligibles, and above all of the first intelligible, that is of God, as the ultimate purpose of philosophy, the neoplatonists organized all their system in relation to deification; however, enthusiasm and fanaticism characterize the attitude of these philosophers, who abandoned dualism, so essential in Plato, in favour of the emanative system associated with Eastern speculation, through which they believed they could better explain the existence of all things from God, and they justified the return of the human soul to God through ecstasy: "In order to make this easier, after abandoning the dualistic system adopted by Plato, they took the system of emanation from oriental philosophy, and through the various levels, natures, habits, and classes of emanation they deduced the entire universe of things both visible and invisible, especially the infinite series of spiritual and intelligible natures. Since it was reckoned that the spirit of man was connected with this series, it was necessary to demonstrate the order with which the spirit, freed from the weight of ephemeral and corporeal things by means of various levels, purifications, and elevations, could rise to its original source and delight in contemplation, not only ideal but intuitive, of God and union with him, and at the same time of the association and union with the minor gods and those spirits among whom they said the mind takes its place" (II, p. 364).

The purpose of the philosophical attitude of the neoplatonists, corrupted as it was by mystical and theurgic influences, was to offer a rational justification of the pagan cult and to overcome the competition of Christianity by a doctrine that would show an almost divine aspect: "Ammonius, the father of the new philosophy, decided to eliminate the detestable absurdity of pagan superstition as far as possible by reforming philosophy, thus introducing a more rational meaning into those foolish religious beliefs and that irrational cult" (II, p. 370). To this end they made use of a language that was obscure and subtle to the point where not even they themselves managed

---

Mosheim (1693–1755) that can be mentioned are his successful textbooks of ecclesiastical history, among them *Institutiones Historiae Christianae antiquioris* (Helmstädt, 1737); *Institutiones Historiae Christianae recentioris* (Helmstädt, 1741). A collection of essays recalls the model of the eccelesiastical history of G. Arnold: *Anderweitiger Versuch einer unparteiischen und gründlichen Ketzergeschichte* (Helmstädt, 1746–1748).

to understand what they were saying (II, p. 380); they took some doctrines, such as the Trinity, from Christianity, and considered Christ to be among the philosophers.

This Enlightenment prejudice against a philosophy which gave too much importance to a supra-rational or even irrational element such as ecstasy, certainly did not help Brucker recognize in the phenomenon of neoplatonism its inspirational motives and its theoretical value; but he must be credited with having made it possible to analyse neoplatonic philosophy in isolation from primitive Platonism and hence different from the picture that philosophical historiography, still tied to the schemas of the Renaissance and Marsilius Ficinus, had given up to that time. What led Brucker to this discovery of the more particular aspects of Neoplatonism was not his interest in the philosophical themes that had developed in it, as was to happen in the era of Romanticism, but the theological implications and the consequences that were manifest in ecclesiastical history, as a result of its encounter with Christian thought.

Brucker distinguishes two important points in the philosophy of the Church Fathers, marked by the appearance in the third century of the "eclectic" school. The Fathers of the first rank, from Justin to Clement of Alexandria, had a critical attitude towards pagan philosophy, and yet they resorted to it to find arguments and proofs in support of Christianity. In this use of Greek philosophy they were guided by the prejudice of the authority of the Scriptures, which prevented them from making an appropriate distinction between the light of reason and revelation, and led them to seek in the Hebrew tradition the first sources of wisdom, which they then found, in a partially corrupted form, in pagan philosophy.

The second phase of Patristic philosophy began with Origen, who was the first to introduce neoplatonic philosophy into Christianity; he thought of matter as privation, as non-being in contrast to the creative power of God, and welcomed the emanative system in its explanation of the Trinitarian dogma, in which "the Son is distinct from the Father and is not equal to him, but is like the rays in relation to he sun" (III, p. 446). Neoplatonism also influenced Augustine, but to a smaller extent. Hence the common prejudice of the Fathers "that the natural theology of the Platonists was much closer to Christian philosophy than that of the other sects, and that it had many teachings in common with it, teachings which, either taken from the Hebrews or taught to the Platonists by the Providence of the Divine Word, should be claimed by the Christians and used to demonstration divine truth" (III, p. 504).

Given these presuppositions, Brucker could not deny the Platonism of the Fathers, as the Jesuit Baltus had done, though he did not fully embrace the opposite theory of Le Clerc. First of all, he makes it clear that the Fathers did not know the original Platonism of the early Academy, but rather Neoplatonism, which was characterised by its attempt to harmonize the different sects and had attempted, under Ammonius, to come to terms with Christianity. In the second place, he points out that they never reached the point of subordinating Christian doctrines to the Platonic system. Apart from a few, like Origen, Synesius of Cyrene, and Pseudo-Dionysius, the Platonism of the Fathers was "relative", and so it should be considered relatively to their philosophical attitude, which aimed to defend and consolidate Christianity: "The Fathers [of the Church] judged Plato to be the philosopher who philosophized

better than all the others, as far as could be expected from a pagan, on God and divine things, and they were convinced of this for the reasons mentioned above, and because of the harmony that they perceived between the beliefs of many Platonists and the sacred teachings of the Christians. They did not condemn everything that they found in Plato, but believed he had taken some doctrines from the Hebrews, either through his own Pythagorean training or during the literary journey that he had made among the Barbarians; they judged that those doctrines were the remains of true philosophy and maintained that they belonged among sacred teachings" (III, pp. 331–332).

Brucker's opinion of Patristic philosophy does not reflect the attitude of veneration and respect with which the Lutheran theologians regarded the early period of the history of the Church. It is true that in his definition of Christian dogmas he denies the dependence of the Fathers on Platonic teachings; he praises their moral characters and their holy intentions, but disapproves of their way of carrying out philosphical speculation. They proved to be inexpert in the art of reasoning as they had not made a precise distinction between the light of reason and revelation (*Disputationes PP. non satis accuratae ob ratiocinandi imperitiam*, III, p. 349); they did not know the art of criticism, and used an obscure and allegorical style. They completely neglected physics, erroneously considering it to be usless (*Inutilia quoque esse, quae de rebus naturalibus praecipiuntur, statuebant*), and reduced moral teaching to the interpretation of the Bible (III, pp. 356–357).

Brucker's account of Arab thought can be considered as a premise to that of Scholastic philosophy, which was defined as "Arabo-Aristotelian" by early eighteenth-century historians of philosophy. Among the Arabs, philosophy was promoted at the time of the Hashemite dynasty, but it was soon subjugated to the Islamic religion (*in servitutem Islamismi redacta est irreparabili veritatis damno*) (III, p. 134). The other element that characterized the philosophy of the Arabs, and would then pass into Latin scholasticism, was their exclusive love of Aristotle, whom they did not always understand very well, but whose errors they continued to spread: "On some topic they spread more openly the poison that Aristotle had disseminated in a more disguised way, and those things that Aristotle had presented in an ambiguous way, and that he had administered to his readers as problems to be discussed, were professed by them clearly as true statements and principles. Thus they made Aristotle's impious errors their own in an open and audacious way" (III, p. 153).

Brucker agrees with the historians of his time in his strongly negative opinion on the Middle Ages. He declares that it was a period of great corruption in every area of life, and hence also in philosophy. The image most frequently found is that of "shadows", the unhappy night of barbarianism and ignorance, the "darkness" that descended on Europe in the time of the barbarian invasions and which would last until the fifteenth century. In this fundamentally negative assessment we can see the mentality of an epoch, the eighteenth century, with its faith in reason and progress, which saw the Middle Ages as precisely the negation of the ideals in which it believed; yet it is notable that Brucker should dwell so long on his account of medieval philosophy (III, pp. 532–912), and look with so much interest into the

middle of those dark centuries in search of the causes of "rampant barbarism" and the attempts to get out of it.

Historical study of medieval philosophy was still at an early stage: Tribbechow, Jakob Thomasius, and Heumann had devoted some attention to it, but there was not as yet a complete history of medieval thought: "For just as philosophy itself lay in oblivion and desolation, so the history of the intellect was totally neglected". [25] This gap proved to be particularly serious in view of the interest that the philosophy of this period held for both the philosopher and the theologian. Indeed, it shows the origin and the dangers of mystical philosophy and Scholasticism, the former inspired by Plato, or rather, by Neoplatonism, and the latter by Aristotle, both of whom had the same basic prejudice: the confusion between reason and revelation, and a willingness to reconcile Christianity with pagan philosophy, "actually preferring Plato and Aristotle to Christ" (III, p. 558).

The Middle Ages began in the seventh century with the breakdown of relations between East and West, caused by the cultural decline in the East following the closure of the schools of Athens and Alexandria of Egypt, and the barbarian invasions, which caused the suspension not only of economic and political contacts but also of cultural exchanges, "so that in the end the use and knowledge of Greek was lost and there was hardly anyone who could read the books of the Greek philosophers" (III, p. 559). In his definition of the other cause of medieval barbarism, Brucker had in mind Tribbechow and Heumann and the Protestant tradition in general, which identified medieval corruption with the degeneration of the Papacy and the Church of Rome. In fact, philosophy failed, because of the spread of superstition, for which Gregory the Great was primarily responsible: "For since such an important man of the highest authority and one who defined everything *ex cathedra*, gripped by prejudice, fulminated against secular learning and in particular against philosophy, all Christian people were obliged to adapt to the opinion of their pastor, even though it was foolish and mean (*quamvis ineptum et miserandum*)" (III, p. 562).

A gradual recovery of philosophy took place within the context of medieval barbarism, though it was contaminated by the corruption of the time. This was Scholastic philosophy: "We are now about to give our attention to that sectarian pseudo-philosophy of the Middle Ages, which arose partly from the quibbling (*cavillationibus*) of the Stoics and partly from the foolishness of Aristotelian dialectics, which, mixing together the principles of reason and revelation and making use of the prejudice of authority and the opinions of learned men badly cobbled together, destroyed the very principles of truth, and with a pointless and complicated series of arguments and innumerable subtleties did violence to every purest truth, and with the weapons of dialectic destroyed all true philosophy and introduced very many errors" (III, pp. 720–721).

A philosophy of this type did not appear out of the blue in the twelfth or thirteenth century, nor did it originate simply from the introduction of the Arab texts;

[25] Brucker, III, p. 554: "Ut enim ipsa philosophia situ squaloreque obducta et abiecta iacuit, ita humani quoque intellectus historia prorsus neglecta est".

its roots can be found in the early centuries of the Middle Ages, even as far back as the philosophy of St Augustine, who had used neoplatonic dialectic to demonstrate the truths of Christianity: "As the reputation of Augustine had always been very high in the Church [. . .] it was natural that, after abandoning the prudence of this excellent doctor [of the Church], these men should have come aground on the sandbanks and should have taken the excuse to contrive this litigious type of philosophy from Augustine" (III, p. 723). Another important influence were Porphyry and Boethius's translations of Aristotle's works on logic, which gave the Scholastics the opportunity "to examine abstract, general, and uncertain notions" (III, p. 723). However, Scholastic theology was also the child of medieval society and its institutions. Following the barbarian invasions, classical culture disappeared and with it public schools; from that moment, the monasteries became the only centres in which philosophical speculation was still carried on. Once in the hands of the clerics and monks, philosophy was corrupted and subordinated to theology: "Thus philosophy, or rather, its dialectic part, was studied only within these limits, becoming the handmaid of theology (*ut ancillaretur theologiae*) and serving her diligently and faithfully" (III, p. 724).

After describing the formation of the elements that made up Scholasticism, Brucker describes in detail the stages of its growth and development, in an analogy with the life of man. Conception took place as early as the fifth century (Augustine); gestation was prolonged over the ninth and tenth centuries with the confusion between the principles of reason and revelation (Johannes Scotus Eriugena); Scholastic philosophy was at last born in the eleventh century with the revival of dialectic (Lanfranc, Anselm); in the twelfth century it assumed its characteristic aspect with the elaboration of the first complete systems (Peter Lombard), reaching full maturity in the following century (Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, St. Bonaventure), when Aristotle entered right into the Latin world, to such an extent that "the whole Christian world became Aristotelian": "It can be seen, from this brief history of the conception, birth, and growth of Scholastic philosophy, which is supported by ecclesiastical history with irrefutable testimonies, that its origin should be judged as follows: it was conceived from the fifth to the eighth centuries, was carried and formed in the womb in the ninth and tenth, it was born in the eleventh, in the twelfth it lived through its childhood and youth, reaching full manhood in the thirteenth century, and at that time the entire philosophical universe was filled with the innumerable sects of the Formalists, Realists, Conceptualists, Nominalists, Scotists, Thomists, Ockhamists, and Averroists" (III, p. 730).

The characteristic aspects of Scholastic thought were eristic dialectics, which is not "rational philosophy" (*philosophia rationalis*) but "the art of quarrelling" (*ars rixosa*), the conjunction of dialectics and metaphysics and philosophy and theology, and the mania of Aristotelianism. The soul of Scholasticism is precisely dialectic or the art of empty debate, which leads to a search for hair-splitting and verbal distinctions. The whole of metaphysics becomes a "verbal" science constructed from notions and mental subtleties without any reference to reality: "Once they had thrown themselves into the forest of abstract notions and mental definitions, not concerned to establish the axioms and principles of the nature of things but engaged

in upholding, with uncertain and useless games of concepts (*vaga et vana conceptuum ludificatione*), the argument that they had proposed to defend while refuting opposing opinions, in the midst of these dark places caused by obscure ideas and meaningless words, and barbarous terms that revealed something hideous even in their very sound, they certainly raised up thick clouds of dust; but while causing a great stir they produced little that was good" (III, p. 873).

Love of abstraction and a rejection of experience produced their worst fruit in metaphysics, but the philosophy of nature also remained contaminated. Accepting Francis Bacon's criticism, Brucker condemns the whole of Scholastic physics, since it was lacking in any experimental basis like that of Aristotle: "After substituting the principles of things with uncertain and obscure words, they reduced all natural science on this basis to dialectical and metaphysical nonsense, and they transformed the broad stage of created things into a certain kind of ontology, or, to put it more clearly, into a chaos of confused and insignificant terms, imagining natural beings in the place where they had formed only ridiculous abstractions". [26]

Brucker's negative judgement on Scholasticism is radical, therefore: he finds no positive aspect in the history of the philosophy of this period, nothing that could have encouraged an effective recovery of philosophy. As we have seen, his most serious accusations refer to the confusion between philosophy and theology, and the subordination of philosophical discourse to the requirements of doctrinaire definitions that were of interest to the Roman Curia. Knowledge of the texts of Aristotle did not lead to any progress; on the contrary, they accelerated the corruption of philosophy, because the Scholastics did not understand Aristotle, whom they interpreted following the Arabic translations. This is shown clearly enough by the writings of Thomas Aquinas who, although he was opposed to the followers of Averroës, used Aristotle with the same method as the Arabs had, that is, in order to make a philosophical justification of the truth of faith: "Since he [Thomas Aquinas] used the same method in applying doctrine to theology, using Aristotelian philosophy for the defence of religious doctrine, after of course having sought agreement in the Fathers, and Scripture, and confirming it with the metaphysical reasons and the testimonies of the pagan philosophers, and adding very subtle questions and ambiguous theological arguments, in the manner of the Arabs, it is absolutely clear that he did not eliminate the defects of Scholastic philosophy but, if anything, accentuated them" (III, pp. 806–807).

The third period of the history of philosophy is characterized by a clear opposition to the Middle Ages and Scholasticism and includes various attempts to correct and reform philosophy. Brucker places the work of the humanists and scholars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries at the beginning of the process of the birth of modern philosophy; the rediscovery of Greco-Latin classical literature and thus also

[26] Brucker, III, p. 895: "Qui cum incertas et obscuras voces pro rerum principiis supposuisset, nacti hi homines talem ducem ad dialecticas et metaphysicas tricas totam scientiam naturalem revocarunt, et tam amplum rerum creatarum theatrum, in ontologiam quandam, vel, ut rectius dicamus, in terminorum confusorum et nihil significantium chaos transformarunt, entia sibi naturalia fingentes, quae solae formaverunt abstractiones absurdissimae".

of ancient philosophy led to a condemnation of medieval culture and Scholasticism. This is the case of Petrarch: "Here it is only right to observe that Petrarch, whose example in restoring good literature was followed by many, was also a great expert in ancient philosophy (*historiae quoque veteris philosophiae fuisse peritissimum*) and made most appropriate use of it to bring back to life a more elegant and at the same time more rigorous type of learning" (IV, p. 24).

The Protestant Reformation brought about a decisive change in the history of philosophy. If humanism and the fifteenth century were the dawn of the philosophical renaissance, the sixteenth century and the reform of religion represented the actual rising of the much longed-for sun (*non aurora modo sed ipse solis desideratissimi ortus*). The renewal of philosophy was fulfilled by means of the Reformation in two ways: by uprooting from barbarism the spirit of ignorance and corruption, the Reformation freed philosophy from the slavery of superstition and the yoke of Scholastic philosophy, allowing it to conquer new horizons; secondly, it finally set philosophy free from theology: "Up to this moment, as was shown above, philosophy and theology had been closely linked; and as both of them had the form of Scholasticism, which came from those men who had been educated in the chairs of the public schools and the monasteries in the superstition that had spread everywhere, they were ruined to such an extent and were in such submission to the ecclesiastical hierarchy that the corruption of both of them must necessarily have originated from this source. But when men who were strong and endowed with divine zeal together with great intellectual gifts, took on the task of curing this common evil, not only was the doctrine of salvation re-established and corrected, but philosophy too had a happier future" (IV, pp. 77–78). In reply to the Catholics, who accused Luther of philosophical ignorance, Brucker grants him the honour of having reformed philosophy ("Martini Lutheri merita in philosophiae emendationem", IV, pp. 93–96): he contributed to the defeat of Scholasticism, refuting empty dialectics and pointing out the errors that had crept into theology and the Christian religion from their conjunction with Aristotelian philosophy.

The break with Scholasticism, carried out by a revival of the authentic thought of the ancients, was the dominating element in the philosophical climate of the sixteenth century, which witnessed the re-flowering of the Greek sects. Love of Antiquity was, however, harmful for the men of the Renaissance: their impassioned research and the philological study of the texts led them to a state of veneration and absolute respect for Classical civilization and a passive acceptance of the teachings and systems of the Ancients. They were convinced that the Greeks had brought each part of philosophy to its completion; hence they believed that any autonomous philosophical research was pointless, judging it more important to repeat the ancient systems in their authentic formulation: "Philosophers of this type, having no faith in their own powers, though unjustifiably seeing that a number of them were of the highest intelligence, did not dare to attempt anything with their own strength and feared any path not previously trodden. For this reason, by choosing the Greek philosophers as their guide, and selecting one of them as their master, they restored Greek philosophy, and enriched and adorned it with the most recent discoveries" (IV, pp. 108–109).

The Renaissance undoubtedly had its merits on a philosophical level, since it had at least brought an end to Scholastic thought, but this did not constitute real progress. Philosophical research that was truly new began only in the seventeenth century and was due mainly to the emergence of eclectic philosophy. The results gained by modern philosophy in the space of a single century are considered broader and more important than those achieved in many centuries by philosophical reflection. As to eclectic philosophy, the philosophy of the seventeenth century is clearly superior, not only to the "sectarian" philosophy of the Renaissance and the Middle Ages, but also to ancient Greek speculation: "In fact, it reveals the history of eclectic philosophy, which, having rejected the foolish prejudice of the sect that for so many centuries fascinated the minds of the philosophers, and seeking with correct freedom of spirit the very nature of philosophical ideas, has discovered significant truths on the basis of principles that are genuinely philosophical, and collected together all the truths scattered among the numerous sects in a coherent way" (V, "Praefatio", p. 1).

In defining modern philosophy as "eclecticism", Brucker is at once offering an "Enlightenment" criterion of interpretation of the philosophy nearest his own time. Despite the profound differences in theories and methods, the greatest philosophers of the modern age, from Bruno to Campanella, Bacon, Descartes, Leibniz, and Ch. Thomasius are all defined as eclectics, because they claimed for themselves the freedom of thought and choice that are the basis of philosophy, a science founded on the autonomous use of reason and the destruction of all prejudices. The horizon of eclectic philosophy is enlarged and the boundaries are traced successfully through the speculation of Bacon, Descartes and Leibniz, who proposed the reform of philosophy in all of its aspects.

Francis Bacon can be called the "first true father of eclectic philosophy"; although he did not wish to set up a new system of philosophy he gave the means and ideas for doing so to the following age: "he provided the observations and rules by using which the following age restored and corrected the appearance of philosophy" (V, p. 90). Brucker praises Bacon's struggle against prejudice, his resolve to question nature directly without any dogmatic mediation (*reiecta omni auctoritate non homines, sed naturam sequi constituerat*) and to aim his research towards what was useful, rejecting empty speculation, and ridiculing the exclusiveness of academic institutions (*professorias consuetudines hominum academicorum*). The same rejection of final causes in physical science that was to be criticized in other authors is here understood in a positive sense, in that it removed prejudice of a metaphysical kind from the field of nature: "he excluded final causes from physics, putting them back into theology, so that philosophers should not be distracted by the search for the formal material cause but should consult nature itself; because of this he preferred Democritus to Plato, arousing the disdain of Cudworth, who was a great lover of Plato since he had filled natural science with comments on the divinity" (V, p. 105).

On the question of Descartes's denial of final causes ("thus, in the end we do not deduce any motives regarding the purpose that God or nature intended in producing natural things": V, p. 298), Brucker was more critical. The innate idea is not sufficient to demonstrate the existence of God, nor can one deny ordinary people (*simplicioribus*) the possibility of knowing and glorifying the Creator by

contempling what he has created (V, p. 299). In this criticism of Descartes Brucker reveals his theological leanings, and the caution that came from his activity as a pastor accustomed in his contact with the faithful to refer continually to the beauty and harmony of Creation in order to strengthen their faith. Together with this motivation is his awareness of the limits of Descartes's doctrine, both because of the most recent scientific discoveries ("however it cannot be demonstrated, since he neglected the ends of natural things that are revealed to human inquiry, with which, even if one cannot discover the nature of things, yet a way close to it can be opened up, as shown for example by anatomical observations": V, p. 300), and, above all, thanks to Leibniz's philosophy, which combines finalistic theory and mechanistic doctrine through the concept of pre-established harmony: "Leibniz was shown the simple and clear way of pre-established harmony, which does nor overthrow the natural law of movement, nor have recourse to a *Deus ex machina*, but leaves the soul and the body to their movements according to the natural laws and yet demonstrates that the substances are in perfect accordance" (V, p. 424).

There is constant comparison with Leibniz in Brucker's account of Descartes's philosophy. Descartes represents, in the development of eclectic philosophy, a step that was important but soon superseded: Leibniz and not Descartes was for Brucker the central figure of modern thought. Following the judgement of Leibniz, Brucker affirms that "Cartesianism did not reach as far as the inmost part of true philosophy, but stopped at its antechamber; thus it hardly brushed past the entrance door of nature, and so had to proceed more deeply, listening to nature itself" (V, p. 251)

All of Descartes's most important theories are considered as only partially valid, always in need of integration. The rules of method, for example, "are not adequate [. . .] and for that reason are not so universal as not to be lacking in many points, and furthermore the application remains dubious and uncertain" (V, p. 289). Doubt, while it allows him to found the possibility of science above all prejudices, implies in turn another prejudice: "that the one who created us formed us in such a way that we always make mistakes and that, as in a dream, we imagine to be truths those things that we have drawn from prejudice" (V, p. 294). The ontological proof of the existence of God has to be completed with the proof of the possibility of the absolutely perfect being. But in Brucker's view, the weakest part of Cartesian philosophy was its physics, which is discredited by its rigorously deductive procedure and by the very small weight given to experience. Descartes used hypotheses, such as the definition of the body, the validity of which was established by reason alone, to arrive at an aprioristic interpretation of nature not founded on the observation of phenomena. Newton's declaration *hypotheses non fingo* is the correct attitude for scientists, who for this reason found Descartes's method inadequate: "They warn that it is not enough for a philosopher to imagine a hypothesis that is useful and is not absurd, that is to say, is possible, but that one should also bear in mind the likelihood and the experience by which the hypothesis is supported [. . .]. Although they do not withhold intellectual approval of Descartes's system, they criticise it for having paid too little attention to the laws of nature and for having obtained these laws more from intelligence than from observation of nature (*ex ingenio magis, quam*

consulta natura), and for this reason they consider that his hypotheses are of little use" (V, p. 314).

Leibniz's philosophy is considered as going further than that of Descartes in both physics and metaphysics. Although Brucker declares several times that Leibniz never managed to formulate a complete system of philosophy, he tends to regard his thought in a systematic way, giving it rigour where this was lacking: "For that reason, it is necessary to collect together from his philosophical writings and to set out in a systematic way (*ordine systematico exponere*) the things that the illustrious philosopher agreed with" (V, p. 398). Thus it was a philosophy that seemed to be the perfect incarnation of the rationalistic spirit of the eighteenth century, particularly in Germany. The superiority of Leibnizian philosophy is defined by its capacity to reconcile the opposing demands of science and metaphysics, the order of the universe and the contingency of the individual parts, reason and faith, in a unitary vision, following a speculative ideal which Brucker had originally found in Buddeus's reflections, but which was subsequently explained better in the philosophy of Leibniz and Wolff.

While Brucker considers logic to be subsidiary in Leibniz ("in logic he said a few things about the nature of ideas": V, p. 398), he particularly stresses his thinking on metaphysics, the central part of which is found in the theory of the monad, the unitary principle, substantial and immaterial, of reality: "The main reason why Leibniz placed the principles and elements of all things in monads is expressed in the following theory: that it is necessary that the compound be formed from simple parts, the compound emerging from the joining together of these. He considered that without these simple principles nothing real could be found in compound things" (V, p. 402). The notion of the "monad" was already known to ancient philosophy, but Leibniz was the first to establish it on solid philosophical foundations, such as the principle of identity of indiscernibles ("We should attribute to him the honour of having made use of this principle for demonstrating metaphysical truths": V, p. 404). Theology is seen as a metaphysical specification referring to the divine attributes and the relationship between God and man: "The most outstanding point in Leibnizian metaphysics is his rational theology, or the doctrine of God, which he studied with great attention and passion. Not only did he undertake the task of correcting the Cartesian proof of the existence of God, but it seemed to him that he had deduced a unique convincing argument capable of destroying atheism on the basis of a correct and shrewd application of the principle of sufficient reason, starting from the contingency of existing things" (V, p. 432).

The last part of the *Historia critica*, on the reform of philosophy in its various parts, gives Brucker the opportunity of introducing thinkers like Locke and Newton, Pufendorf and Spinoza, who were at the centre of the philosophical debate, and to make an assessment of the philosophical speculation of his time. Brucker agrees with Locke's critical approach to the problem of knowledge: "He rejected all opinions and considered that one should philosophize by reflecting on the human intellect (*ex consideratione humani intellectus*) and on one's own conscience" (V, p. 609). He praises the scientific method of Newton ("the incomparable philosopher and mathematician"), but rejects his metaphysical interpretation:

"even if he did not wholly despise metaphysics, he completely neglected that type of reasoning, rejecting all hypotheses and looking only at experience" (V, p. 646). With typical Enlightenment enthusiasm, Brucker lists scientific discoveries ("Nova inventa physica", V, pp. 655–658), inventions ("Inventa organa optica et mechanica": V, pp. 658–660), contributions in the field of natural sciences ("Historia naturalis exculta": V, pp. 660–661), and collaboration between scientists meeting in academies with the support of the public authorities: "natural history has made notable advances since philosophers became involved in natural research with the support of the public authorities, and formed appropriate societies regulated by laws and institutions, while princes encourage their efforts with their authority, privileges, honours, and money" (V, pp. 611–622).

On the subject of Spinoza's philosophy, Brucker shows the same hostility and incomprehension as his master Buddeus had done, considering it only from the point of view of atheism: "In this system there are a number of things that are absurd and contrary to both experience and metaphysical notions" (V, p. 694). He singles out a fundamental defect in Spinoza's procedure, that is, the inappropriate moving of the concept of substance from the level of logic to that of ontology: "Here, as we are not able to digress, we simply mention the fact that Spinoza's entire system is founded in the first place on a false idea of substance: that is, that one substance cannot be produced by another, given that existence belongs to its nature; and he proves this by the fact that if things have nothing in common the one cannot be the cause of the other. He assumes this without demonstrating it, confusing substance itself with the concept of substance and therefore, considering it abstractly, he imagines a substance that exists only in the mind and then transfers it inappropriately to the physical and metaphysical system" (V, pp. 694–695).

In taking these positions, Brucker reveals himself to be a "moderate" figure of the Enlightenment, an admirer of Leibniz and Newton, and of the advances of modern science, but suspicious towards philosophical systems that historically had had a negative influence on theological themes, at least for the Lutherans, such as Neoplatonism and Scholasticism, or which could bring danger to religious faith, such as Spinozism. The search for a correct balance between rationalism and orthodoxy explains to a great extent the success of the *Historia critica* and its ability to find its way into different cultural milieux, such as the world of the universities, both Catholic and Protestant, and the circle of the Encyclopaedists.

8.1.7.4. From the point of view of style, the historical account has a two-fold aspect: on one hand is the biographical aspect, where the descriptive style dominates, with full references to all the episodes that can in some way contribute towards the creation of the physical, moral, and intellectual portrait of a thinker; on the other is the specifically philosophical part, schematic, and constructed by "philosophemes" which are arranged according to the deductive method. This framework represents a precise choice of method, theorized in the "Dissertatio": after defining the concept of the history of philosophy and distinguishing between *historia personarum* and *historia doctrinarum*, Brucker sets out his intentions as follows: "Therefore, we who have decided to consider the history of philosophy in its entire range (*Nobis itaque*

quibus historiam philosophicam universo suo complexu considerare constitutum est), will approach it by first of all explaining clearly the lives of the philosophers, their achievements, their fate, and, moreover, their followers and opponents and all the memorable information that the sources record; then we will look for the origin, subsequent progress, and decline of the sects; finally, we will concentrate with particular attention on the systems of philosophy (*tum vero accurato potissimum oculo ad systemata philosophorum attendamus*) and will examine, on the basis of a consultation of the sources that are trustworthy and as authentic as possible, the principles on which all the rest is founded (*principia, quibus reliqua nituntur*), and from these we shall deduce the conclusions, using, where possible, the actual words of the philosophers" (I, p. 11).

This framework is followed faithfully in the work. The chapter on Aristotle (I, pp. 776–839) offers us a first example. The presentation of his life, meticulous and wordy, begins with the birth and youth of the philosopher and his early studies at the school of Plato; then Brucker speaks of his stay with Hermias and at the court of Philip of Macedon, as tutor to the future Alexander the Great, of his return to Athens, of the founding of the Lyceum and of his flight to Chalcis after the death of his protector. Brucker also mentions Aristotle's wife and children and finally describes his physical and mental virtues and vices. There is a paragraph on his writings, with the history of the transmission of the Aristotelian *corpus*, and the modern editions. Before going on to the system, Brucker provides a "Philosophiae peripateticae consideratio generalis",[27] in which, by using the biographical narrative, he offers some general observations on Aristotelian philosophy in order to grasp its "ratio", the spirit that inspires the system. The purpose of these observations is to conclude the biographical account and to lead us to a reading of Aristotle's teachings. Brucker then goes on to the philosophy, expounded by dogmas and divided into logic, natural philosophy, psychology (with a paragraph on the question of the immortality of the soul), metaphysics (with a paragraph on Aristotle's atheism), and practical philosophy.

In his account of the neoplatonic or "eclectic" school (II, pp. 189–462), Brucker follows the same procedure, with the sole difference that since in this case there is no true founder, the biographical description includes the lives of all of the philosophers who belonged to the school, from Potamon of Alexandria to Damascius. Next come the "Observationes generales de philosophia sectae eclecticae",[28] in which Brucker

[27] Brucker, I, pp. 800–805: I. "Ineluctabilis obscuritas scriptorum Aristotelis"; II. "Scopus philosophiae Aristotelis"; III. "Philosophiae aulae moribus aptata"; IV. "Philosophia naturalis incerta et vaga"; V. "Mathematica intempestive immixta"; VI. "Aristotelis philosophiae non omne denegandum pretium".

[28] Brucker, II, pp. 357–382: I. "Indolem accepit a patria Aegypto, ubi exclusa est, et in qua syncretismus religionum diu iam regnaverat"; II. "Occasio huius syncretismi ad philosophiam translati dissensiones Phil. Alex."; III. "Philosophia Pythagorico-Platonica loco fundamenti electa"; IV. "Sed cum Aristotelica conciliata et cum reliquis sectis"; V. "Enthusiasmus finis huius philosophiae"; VI. "Tota philosophia enthusiasmo superstructa. Platonicum systema adulteratum"; VII. "Caussae electi enthusiasmi"; VIII. "Philosophia orientalis sibi vindicata"; IX. "Attemperata Christianorum rationibus"; X. "Superstitionis facies picta et emendata"; XI. "Philosophorum dissidia sublata"; XII. "Vitae philosophorum sanctae Christianis oppositae"; XIII. "Receptae doctrinae

offers an interpretation of neoplatonic thought backed up by documents based on an analysis of the historical circumstances in which it developed, and finally, going back to the *Enneads* of Plotinus, he describes the system, divided into dialectics, metaphysics, psychology and cosmology.

Going on to a more detailed examination of the elements considered by Brucker, we can note the importance given in the biographical description, to the historical background of the philosophers. Brucker's reconstruction is always accompanied by reference to the historical facts, supplying the specific characteristics of each period in the history of philosophy, and putting in their appropriate place the free Greek *poleis*, the Macedonian conquest of the East, the change from Roman Republic to Empire, the crisis of the Roman Empire and the Barbarian invasions, the reforms of Charlemagne and Papal politics in the Middle Ages, the fall of the Eastern Empire and the Protestant Reformation. It was not Brucker's intention to produce a history of philosophy in which philosophy and political and civil history are heavily dependent upon one another, something that would have gone much further than what he proposed; rather, he sought in history criteria which could serve as internal divisions in the work, to bring to prominence the periods in which philosophical speculation showed common characteristics and within which it might be possible to compare the different systems. Thus, in the Roman period we have, on the one hand, the continuation of Greek philosophy (*philosophia gentilis*), and on the other the birth of Christian thought (*philosophia veterum christianorum*), with their inevitable contrasts, but also the attempts to bring them closer, as appears from the history of Neoplatonism and Patristics. With the fall of the Empire and the Barbarian invasions, the form of philosophy changed and the Scholastic system was gradually constructed, deriving its characteristic hallmark from its encounter with the Arabs and from the protection that it enjoyed at the Papal Curia (III, p. 876). Scholasticism declined when the perfecting of philological studies made it possible to recover authentic ancient thought, but, above all, when the influence of the Reformation was felt, truly marking the beginning of modern philosophy (IV, p. 83).

Within the historically defined periods, the connections between the thinkers are studied in the classical form of their derivation and opposition. The philosophers are always grouped together according to the schools to which they belonged, following the advice expressed in the "Dissertatio" ("The sects must be carefully examined": I, p. 14), and are divided into founders and followers or people who systematized a certain direction of thought that developed within a sect. Greek philosophy after Thales is, by definition, "sectarian philosophy" and, as a result, the division into sects will also be decisive in those periods, such as the Roman era and the Renaissance, which took their inspiration from Greek philosophy. Each philosopher, whose placing in the sect is decided on the basis of biographical elements, is considered in relation to his contribution to the development of the system of

---

Christianorum"; XIV. "Christus numero philosophorum adscriptus"; XV. "Philosophis non minora miracula vindicata, quam essent Christi"; XVI. "Fraudes, suppositiones, mendacia habita [...]"; XVII. "Severior et praestantior doctrina de Deo divinisque exculta"; XVIII. "Sanctior philosophia moralis revocata".

that school, even though Brucker then limits himself to an account of the system of the founder of the school or that of its main representatives. Thus the philosophy of the Stoics is that of Zeno, and the system of the "eclectic" sect is what can be taken from Plotinus and Iamblichus. The other parts of the history of philosophy, with the exception of that of the seventeenth century, in which we can see the emergence of genuine eclectic philosophy, and in which each philosopher is therefore considered independently, are also reduced to sects. For example, the account of Arab philosophy is divided into two stages: in the first, following chronological order, the writer narrates the lives of the philosophers and speaks of their studies ("De origine et progressu philosophiae inter Saracenos sive Arabes": III, pp. 3–123), while their teachings are explained in the second ("De natura et indole philosophiae Saracenicae": III, pp. 123–240).

While Brucker tends, by preference, to concentrate on the internal aspect of the sects, he also takes notice of the links between thinkers belonging to different schools. Pythagoras's long stay in Egypt is important for understanding the use of the two-fold method, arcane and popular, of the Italic school: "He had learnt it during his initiation in the schools of the Egyptian and Greek theologians, and postulated the same purpose when he set up his own philosophical society" (I, p. 1038). The same method later passed to the Eleatics and in that school it was to cause the fracture represented by Parmenides's philosophy of being and the atomism of Democritus. The syncretism of the Stoics is due principally to the type of studies followed by their founder, Zeno, whose masters were Pythagoreans and Platonists ("Systema Zenonis eius circumstantiis conforme": I, p. 907).

Brucker also goes in the reverse direction. In his account of the system, when looking at certain statements or hypotheses, he sometimes wonders to what extent they are original or whether they go back to earlier philosophies: in expounding Descartes's theory of the origin of the universe, for example, he declares that the idea of vortices had already been formulated by Democritus and Epicurus ("Descartes was not the first to invent vortices, but he picked them up from Democritus and Epicurus and completed them with astronomical calculations, making use of them in his explanation of the solar system": V, p. 313); or, when speaking of Plato's natural philosophy, he finds its premises in Pythagoras: "In proving things and in deducing them from geometrical principles, Plato's *Timaeus* is important; in it, the study of geometry and the Pythagorean philosophical method caused Plato to corrupt the clarity of nature with mathematical speculations unable to explain the true nature of things, as Burnet has rightly deplored" (I, p. 711).

This type of derivation, which originates from a comparison of philosophical theories, when noting their recovery and development, is never a priority, and is on the contrary justified as part of the preliminary study of the *circumstantiae* that show the links, in a certain sense extrinsic, between the philosophers.[29] The treatment of

[29]The prevalence of biographical items in the division of the historiographical material and their use in the explanation of systems was to be judged by the historians of philosophy of the subsequent period as a sign of Brucker's lack of philosophical spirit. Note what Tennemann states in *A Manual of the History of Philosophy*, I, p. 15: "Brucker published the most complete work yet

the Eleatic school provides an example of this: as we have seen, the "metaphysicists" (Parmenides, Zeno, Melissus), and the "physicists" (Leucippus, Democritus, Protagoras) were members of the Eleatics. Leucippus is placed within the sect first of all because, according to the evidence of Diogenes, he was a disciple of Zeno of Elea and was perhaps originally from Elea himself; Democritus in turn was a disciple of Leucippus and master of Protagoras. The logical derivation of atomism from the metaphysics of Parmenides ("for they too supposed there was a single being, that is, atoms, considering the void, which the Eleatics had first excluded, to be among the non-beings": I, p. 1174), is only a confirmation of the links that the analysis of biographical circumstances had indicated. At the beginning of the chapter, when Brucker tries to give an explanation for the diversity of directions present in the school, he refers exclusively to biographical elements, noting the encounter of the early Eleatics with the Pythagoreans, from whom they had adopted the two-fold arcane and popular method, the first of which was to attract Parmenides and the second Leucippus: "The exoteric teaching of the Eleatics is very different from the esoteric, and they say different things when they speak before the people and when they make the mysteries known to the initiated" (I, p. 1147).

The examination of *circumstantiae* does not always turn out to be for the purpose of understanding the system. At times Brucker's taste for the erudite collection of information prevails over his interest in doctrines. Attention to biographical details, the focus on even less significant events, such as the conversation of Diogenes the Cynic with Alexander the Great or the miracles of Pythagoras (I, pp. 877–881 and 1014–1016), the author's dwelling on the virtues and vices of body and mind, his taste for the description of literary disputes, of which the long history of Cartesianism provides an example (V, pp. 259–285), often seem to distract Brucker from his plan, making him lose sight of his intention to compare the contents of the various philosophies.

In the part describing the philosophical teachings (*doctrinae*), Brucker's procedure responds to the need for a faithful reconstruction and reading of the propositions of the system, limiting as far as possible the explanation of the text and commenting only on the more important and controversial "philosophemes". As he had noted in the "Dissertatio", the reconstruction of the system has to be complete (*totum systema philosophi eruendum*: I, p. 15): a partial assessment can easily be misleading since it does not consider all the connections within the system, and is not referred back to the general principles and axioms that support and prove the individual propositions.

Possessing the general principles of a system makes it possible for the historian to reach results without necessarily using the words and works of the philosophers. In reality, Brucker never stopped referring to the texts, where these existed, adapting and summarising them or sometimes repeating them word for word, as in his

---

known, which, by a laborious assemblage of documents, by the judiciousness of his remarks, and particularly by what it contains on the biography of the philosophers, continues to be useful; but it is deficient in philosophical spirit".

account of Cartesian philosophy, which is taken from the *Discourse on Method*, the *Principles of Philosophy* and *The Passions of the Soul*.[30] However, his procedure does not change substantially even in the absence of texts or direct sources. Brucker reckoned that he could also attribute Thales with a moral philosophy, founding it on his natural philosophy ("Ethica Thaletis": I, pp. 477–478). He acts in the same way with Democritus: "Certainly Democritus also spoke of moral philosophy; however the ancients have not preserved for us anything that could show us the systematic order of his teaching. They only recorded his moral sayings, which we are not able to refer to here. Therefore, we shall indicate briefly what follows from the physical system and from the first principles of the moral teaching of Democritus, while the rest is to be found elsewhere" (I, p. 1198).

In every case, from the origins to the modern period, the account of the doctrines takes place through "philosophemes" arranged in a sequence that is as coherent as possible. By following this method, Brucker obviously manipulates the material he possesses, but the historian's intervention is not arbitrary, in that, while respecting the nature and rules of philosophizing, it is aimed at integrating what the philosophers, for various reasons that can be grasped by reading about the *circumstantiae*, did not bring to a conclusion, or has been lost.[31] In the case of those philosophers whose writings have come down to us, the task of the historian consists of attempting, with continual reference to the text, to make a well-ordered and convincing reconstruction of the system, repeating, as far as possible, the same logical and demonstrative procedure that is at the basis of the individual doctrines. In this sense Brucker's account of Stoic physics is an example: "The physical teachings of the Stoics should be arranged according to a method that looks for the nature of the principles and their consequences, leaving aside those obscure and confused passages in which the ancient Stoics used to define natural philosophy. Everything should be referred back to the natural order that the Ancients mentioned in connection with the Stoic teachings on natural things" (I, pp. 920–921).

Brucker's interpretation of Stoicism follows the path indicated by Jakob Thomasius in the *Exercitatio de Stoica mundi exustione* (Leipzig, 1672), but it is

[30]The two first paragraphs are taken from the *Discourse on Method:* "Cogitationes Cartesii de methodo inveniendi verum", V, pp. 287–289; "Regulae morales Cartesii", V, pp. 289–291. The final paragraph is taken from *The Passions of the Soul:* "Cartesii dogmata de passionibus animae", V, pp. 323–330. In his account of metaphysics and physics Brucker used not the *Metaphysical Meditations*, but the *Principles of Philosophy*, which he could repeat almost word for word because of its arrangement by theses: "Metaphysica Cartesii, de principiis cogitandi", V, pp. 291–304; "Cartesii philosophemata de rebus materialibus", V, pp. 304–311; "Principia Cartesii de mundo aspectabili", V, pp. 311–318; "Cartesii sententia de terra", V, pp. 318–323.

[31]Because of Brucker's tendency to apply the theoretical frameworks of the present to the history of philosophy, his method would later be regarded by Hegel as anti-historical: "Brucker's method is to endow the single theorem of an ancient philosopher with all the consequences and premises which must, according to the idea of the Wolffian Metaphysics, be the premises and conclusions of that theorem, and thus easily to produce a simple, naked fiction as if it were an actual historical fact" (G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, translated by E.S. Haldane (London, 1892–1896), Vol. I, p. 43).

continually supported by evidence taken from Diogenes Laertius, Stobaeus, Seneca, and the Church Fathers. The system turns out to be a well-ordered series of axioms and propositions, the one consequent and dependent on the other. The first affirmation (*antequam aliquid erat, erat chaos*) is followed by the existence of the world as an ordered whole "which includes all things", under the influence of two principles, active and passive (*efficiens et patiens*). The two principles correspond to God and matter: the latter "remains inert", while God looks after everything and its parts, and preserves the world according to his own nature. But the relationship that links God to the world (*non est extra mundum*) means that he cannot be considered the free cause of the universe and provident in the sense of the Christian concept, because "he enters all parts of the world" and works in matter in the same way as the active cause. Brucker's reflections concentrate on this point, which is given two pages of commentary (I, pp. 926–928), in order to refute the interpretation of Lipsius, who had assimilated the Stoic notion of providence into Christianity. He concludes with the opinion of Buddeus, who had accused the Stoics of Spinozism: "It follows that this will is not a free decision of the divine substance, independent of the influence of matter, a decision founded on goodness and on wisdom, which guides and directs all things towards the best ends freely chosen, the sense in which the term Providence is adopted by those who reconcile the Portico of Zeno with the Gate of Solomon. Instead, it is the necessary result of causes and effects and arises from a nexus and an internal combination originating from the nature of the spirit of the world, which produces, orders, and directs, with sure and inevitable links of cause and effect, those things that cannot not happen because of the nature of everything, of which God is part" (I, p. 927). Brucker's judgement was based on the rigorous examination of the Stoic system, considered in its whole, starting from the "first axiom and the principal foundation" (I, p. 922), and therefore he did not allow himself to be distracted by any splendid expressions and words which were, however, present in the writings of the Stoics and which could, taken on their own, indicate a quite different sense: "Almost all of the writings of the Stoics demonstrate that they spoke grandly about God, and this is confirmed by the passage from Diogenes Laertius quoted above; but they should be interpreted with caution and referred back to their principles" (I, p. 925).

All philosophies – both ancient and modern, Aristotelian and Cartesian, Platonic and even the thought of Socrates – end up in the *Historia critica* reduced to systems. Brucker was convinced that in this way he was respecting the criteria of objectivity and historical accuracy, following the cautionary advice that he had set out in the "Dissertatio": "Nothing should be stated unless it is documented historically", "one should not attribute to philosophers one's own opinions", and "one should not refer the ideas of ancient philosophy to the schemas of our own philosophy" (I, pp. 18–19). The reduction of all philosophies, even the most ancient and asystematic, to systems, seems at first sight to contradict these norms; in reality, for Brucker, historiographical study was of value not as a collection of opinions, but only if it led to an understanding of philosophical teachings from their foundations and in their specific content of truth. Hence one has, of necessity, to arrive at an interpretation of philosophical opinions that grasps their authentic significance and

speculative value, beyond that which appears from a first reading. The criterion that justifies the interpretation and the historical reconstruction derives from the very nature of the subject that is to be examined, in other words, "philosophy", which always remains identical in itself while showing different aspects throughout history. Taking philosophy as a guide to the history of philosophy confers on historical study an "objectivity" and "verifiability" that lay the foundation for the possibility of the history of philosophy as a science. This was the objective of the methodological premise, as set out in the "Dissertatio", and was the aim of all of Brucker's historiographical activity, which was to make the history of philosophy a "science" with its own methodological statute and its own rules. [32]

Precisely because it moves within the orbit of the historical disciplines, the history of philosophy can rise to the rank of a positive science only if it is perfectly documented in all of its parts. The collection, criticism, and use of sources is as indispensable to the history of philosophy as the observation of natural phenomena and the carrying out of experiments are to physical science. And Brucker showed that he himself, with his wide learning, was the right person to achieve such a task. This is confirmed by the hundreds of works by ancient and modern authors that he consulted and by the rich critical apparatus of notes accompanying every page of the *Historia critica*, in such a way that every statement is rigorously documented. The serious nature of Brucker's work is also demonstrated by the precise preliminary investigation into sources which would later be the starting point of the historical reconstruction. The general rules of this inquiry are given in the "Dissertatio" (see above, 8.1.3): "The sources closest [to the philosophers in question] are to be sought"; "Care should be taken to know whether the philosophers are referring to their own ideas or to the ideas of others"; "Trustworthy evidence should be sought"; "False writings are to be avoided"; "The level of historical reliability should be examined", and so on. This explains the character of Brucker's history, which is *critica* not only because it aims to reach a "critical" assessment of the past of philosophy, conducted, that is to say, by means of reason and not tied to the prejudices of authority and tradition, but also because it is based on the sources and documents that the past offers to us, using them only after a careful verification of their reliability.

In his work Brucker recognizes two kinds of sources, those that are useful to him for his biographical account, which are writings by the philosopher that refer to episodes in his own life, or biographies written by followers or opponents; and sources that are of interest for the reconstruction of the system. In defining the teachings, the possibility of drawing directly on the author's writings makes the account

[32] Brucker was defined by Braun as the builder of the historico-philosophical science, according to the Enlightenment ideal of clarity and definition: "Ce que Montesquieu entreprend dans le domaine des constitutions ou A. Smith dans celui de l'économie, Brucker le tente dans celui des opinions philosophiques. C'est en cherchant à les expliquer, à faire apparaître le principe de leur devenir et de leur transformation, qu'il en change le statut. Elles ne valent plus désormais comme des absolus, qu'il conviendrait simplement de répéter. Elles s'intègrent dans un enchaînement complexe qui les comprend et qui en fait des moments nécessaires" (Braun, p. 122).

historically reliable; when, on the other hand, it is necessary to use indirect sources, one may reach a greater or lesser degree of probability which nevertheless does not exempt the historian from putting forward his own interpretation. When dealing with the more obscure and uncertain periods of the past, the historian should behave like the geographer who indicates even unknown regions in general terms, while waiting until explorers provide a better knowledge of them: "For as in geography even the outline of unknown lands is offered, and the writers of our country show which countries are still undiscovered so that either they can be found or sailors can be discouraged from the useless effort of searching for them; in the same way it is essential that in the history of the arts the things that can be known or that still remain hidden, obscure, and unknown, should also be pointed out" (I, "Praefatio", p. 4).

The reconstruction of Thales's philosophy undoubtedly presents problems repeat themselves in an almost identical form for all pre-Socratic thought, since no writings have come down to us from the period. Hence one should only refer to those who "were close to them chronologically and who related something about their teachings" (I, p. 463), among them Plato and Aristotle. But, Brucker notes, neither of them can be trusted, the former because of the syncretism that pervaded his philosophy ("in general [Plato] distorted the teachings of the Ancients in order to harmonize them with completely different teachings": I, p. 464), the latter for his desire to found a new sect ("[Aristotle] set it [= Thales] out in such a way that his readers rejected it and it was judged as inferior to their own sects": I, p. 464). The other ancient sources, such as those of Plutarch and Laertius, are many centuries later than the age in which the Ionics lived. Brucker also bears in mind the way that people in modern times sought to use the sources on Thales. Scipio Aquilianus and Thomas Burnet reconstructed the philosophy of the Ionics, attributing them with opinions "that they would not have dreamt of thinking and that owe more to the ingenuity of the interpreters than to their philosophy" (I, p. 465), raising a whole series of false questions such as that of Thales's presumed atheism. [33] In other words, they do not respect the fundamental *circumstantia* of Ionic philosophy which is placed at the beginning of Greek thought and so is necessarily simple and in some aspects still obscure: "At that time human intelligence found itself at the beginning of systematic philosophizing and had sensed some truths by intuition, deducing them from their principles, but not as yet in a complete nor sufficiently accurate way, as usually happens at the beginning of the sciences, which reach their perfection only after many centuries of work and reflection" (I, p. 465). Brucker's reconstruction was to have this precaution at its basis, and he was careful "not to push our conjectures beyond a certain level of likelihood, or rather, to maintain a prudent silence". Brucker does not reject the method of constructing Thales's thought on the sources in our possession, even though they are uncertain; he merely judges that one should proceed with greater caution, with continual reference to the *circumstantiae*, which leads

[33] The text by Scipio Aquilianus that Brucker had in mind was the *De placitis physicis veterum philosophorum ante Aristotelem* (Venice, 1604), which his son, Carl Friedrich Brucker, reprinted in Leipzig in 1756 "ex scriniis paternis"; the work by Burnet was the famous *Archaeologia philosophica*, added to the *Theoria telluris sacra* (Amsterdam, 1699; London, 1733^2, 1734^3).

him to judge the principle "water is the origin of natural things" to be the explanation given by earlier cosmogonies and oriental myths ("For it seems that Thales did not define anything new by this principle, but he merely explained more clearly what the ancient physiologists had, before his time, understood by the term Chaos": I, p. 466).

As he moves on from ancient to modern philosophy, the task of the historian becomes in a certain sense easier, since he can base his interpretation on the writings of the philosophers themselves. But there is still room for the criticism and examination of the sources, especially for the biographical description. Thus the chapter on Descartes (V, pp. 200–334) is introduced by two paragraphs: "Cartesianae historiae fontes unde petendi?"; "Scriptores vitae Cartesii" (V, pp. 200–202). First, Brucker draws attention to the list of writers on Descartes compiled by Beckher;[34] then he reviews the most important writings on his life, in the end choosing to take as his guide the works of the philosopher himself, in particular his *Discourse on Method* in which there are details of Descartes's early philosophical training, and Baillet's *Vie de M. Des Cartes*.[35] However, Brucker frequently disassociates his own opinion from that of Baillet, an over-zealous Cartesian, and with the aid of Christian Thomasius and Leibniz he also points out the negative aspects of Descartes's character, such as his "intention of founding a sect" (V, p. 253).

If we bear in mind that there is a similar process of preliminary criticism of sources at the beginning of each chapter and that this is frequently taken up again in the main text, we will have some idea not only of the fullness of the documentation of the *Historia critica* but also of the thoroughness, bordering on pedantry, with which each note is checked. As a result, the work becomes a "monument" of erudition and a very useful source of reference. Brucker was convinced that the validity of the historical work depends on the fullness of the documentation presented; hence there are continual references to works of philosophical historiography, to Jonsius's *De Scriptoribus* (read in Dorn's revised edition), to the *Bibliotheca Graeca* and the *Bibliotheca Latina* of Fabricius, to Morhof's *Polyhistor*, the *Bibliotheca philosophica Struviana*, and the *Introductio ad historiam litterariam* of Stolle. Ancient philosophical historiography is used extensively, both as a source for biographical information and for references to teachings, in particular the *Adversus Mathematicos* of Sextus Empiricus, the *De placitis philosophorum* of Pseudo-Plutarch, and the *De vitis, dogmatibus et apophthegmatibus clarorum philosophorum* of Diogenes Laertius.[36] Many testimonies of

[34]Cf. W.H. Beckher, *Catalogus scriptorum, qui de Cartesio in ejus vel vitae momumenta, vel doctrinam, novasque hypotheses inquirendo pluribus disseruerunt*, in *Num Cartesius recte atheis annumereretur?* (Königsberg, 1724).

[35]Cf. A. Baillet, *La Vie de Mr. Des-Cartes* (Paris, 1690); a summary of it appeared shortly after: *La Vie de Mr. Des-Cartes abrégée* (Amsterdam, 1693).

[36]The edition of Sextus Empiricus used by Brucker was the *Opera omnia* edited by Fabricius: Sexti Empirici *Opera Graece et Latine*, Codd. castigavit, versiones emendavit, supplevitque et toti operi notas addidit Jo. A. Fabricius (Leipzig, 1718). The *De placitis philosophorum,* on the attribution of which to Plutarch there were already strong doubts ("although it is uncertain whether

ancient thought are taken from the writings of the Church Fathers: Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius of Caesaria, Pseudo-Origen (*Philosophumena*), Epiphanius of Salamina, and Lactantius. However, the historian's attitude towards them is one of caution because of the unreliability of many references to Greek philosophy, since they were influenced by the prejudice that "nothing that has some kind of foundation in truth is to be attributed to the pagans but rather to the citizens of the Christian community" (III, p. 466).

Among modern historians of philosophy, Brucker does not make much use of Horn, criticizing him for his use of uncertain etymology and for making a number of mistakes.[37] On the other hand, he greatly appreciates Stanley's history, which he knew through Olearius's translation, and which supplied many bibliographical details, though they sometimes needed to be put in order. This is the case of Socrates, for whom Stanley offers "a mass of disorganized information [. . .] appropriate for writing the story of Socrates rather than a true history" (I, p. 523). Among the other English historians, Brucker prefers Burnet for the strong critical sense with which he regarded the history of the ancient philosophers; he often contrasted him with Cudworth on, for example, the question of the origin of atomism. Gale and Cudworth are often cited, but nearly always polemically because of their interpretation of Hebrew philosophy as the source of Greek thought by way of a line of continuous transmission of wisdom beginning with Moses: "For one of the Britons, Th. Gale, a very learned man with an extraordinary knowledge of ancient learning, but hindered by an excessive prejudice towards Antiquity, maintains that Pythagoras and Plato took symbolic philosophy from the teaching of Solomon, ethics from the Stoics, medicine from Hippocrates, the history of animals from Aristotle, and from Theophrastus the history of the plants" (I, p. 87).

Among French-speaking historians, Brucker undoubtedly esteemed and followed Bayle the most. Brucker shared his rigorous use of historical criticism, which had allowed him to eliminate many myths and historical errors. While Brucker did not fail to express some reservations of a theological nature, he made constant use of the *Dictionnaire*: "Here we should in particular recall Bayle's *Dictionnaire*, as it deals with the history of ancient and modern philosophy with numerous citations; he subjects the teachings of the ancient philosophers to a critical examination which few before him had carried out, and initiates a discussion on important topics and on rather difficult philosophical questions" (IV, p. 592). Compared with the *Dictionnaire*, Deslandes's *Histoire critique* seemed poor in its opinions and of little use (cf. above, Chapter 3, para 3.1.5): "If he had been provided with the assistance

---

this book [. . .] was written by Plutarch": II, p. 181) is cited in W. Xylander's translation (Frankfurt, 1606). The most important of the ancient histories of philosophy is considered to be Laertius' *De vitis* ("quam ubique adhibuimus": II, p. 624), which Brucker read in the translation of M. Meibom (Amsterdam, 1693) without, however, forgetting Menage's famous commentary.

[37] One of these refers to the figure of Zoroaster: "Horn should not be listened to; he seems to identify Zoroaster with the Bilea mentioned by Moses; this opinion is not at all likely, apart from the art of magic attributed to both of them, which led him to confuse many famous magicians with Zoroaster" (Brucker, I, p. 120).

needed for such an enterprise, if he had refrained from making continual digressions on irrelevant subjects, if he had not confused erudition in general with philosophy, if he had used critical judgement to find out the true thought of the ancient philosophers with the charms of eloquence for which the book is commended, he would have remained faithful to his promises and fulfilled expectations" (I, p. 37).

However, Brucker loves to refer to the German historians, on whom the historiographical approach and most important opinions in the *Historia critica* depend to a great extent. The very plan of writing a "critical" history of philosophy, and the eclectic premise as a criterion for reading philosophical teachings, can be taken back to Heumann and Buddeus; the correct solution to the problem of the origin of philosophy, the opinion on "Barbarian" philosophy, the position taken on the atheism of the philosophers (Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, Plotinus, Spinoza) and the definition of *philosophia eclectica* given to modern thought, also originate with them. The interpretation of the Stoics and Scholasticism comes from Jakob Thomasius, the search for Manichaeism in Plato's system from Christoph Wolf; the interpretation of those parts of the history of philosophy that relate to ecclesiastical history, particularly Patristics and Neoplatonism, owes much to Moshemius.

Erudition, of which the most important aspects are the criticism of sources and a thorough understanding of earlier writings on philosophical historiography, was certainly not the purpose of Brucker's historiography, but merely a tool used by the historian to carry out his work. And this work consisted, strictly speaking, of determining the "system", using all possible biographical references as important elements of explanation. The inquiry into sources and the review of the points of view expressed by the other historians are the point of departure for Brucker's own interpretation, and they bear witness to its reliability and to its level of historical certainty. The more numerous and clear the works of the philosophers, and the more in agreement and the more complete the evidence that is put together on their basis, the more faithful and authentic is the historical reconstruction of the system. The way of explaining the philosophy of Thales is the same as for that of Leibniz, but in the first case, precisely because of the lack of direct evidence and the uncertainty of the indirect evidence, we reach an interpretation that is "likely", not definite and complete; but in the case of the second, on the other hand, we arrive at the highest level of historical accuracy, in that the whole system finds continuous and direct verification in the very words of the philosopher. In this way, the foundations are laid for an exhaustive and scientifically based treatment of the whole history of philosophy, from the most uncertain origins to the highest and clearest development in the modern age.

8.1.8. *Institutiones historiae philosophicae*

8.1.8.1. The idea of extracting a textbook from the *Historia critica* dates back to the years when the latter was published: "I consider that I should also take account of the use that students could make of my book" (Brucker, V, "Additamentum Praefationis"). Brucker was begged to carry out the taks by scholars from all over Europe, as is confirmed by the dedication of the *Institutiones historiae*

philosophicae to the members of the *Istituto delle scienze* of Bologna: "Because of your courtesy and kindness [...] I have decided to publish a summary of the longer work in which I have described the critical history of philosophy; I have been persuaded to do this by the wishes and opinion of friends" (*Institutiones historiae philosophicae*, "Praeclarissimae Academiae Scientiarum Instituti Bononiensis Membris S.P.D. Iacobus Bruckerus").

After the *Auszug aus den Kurtzen Fragen*, the *Institutiones* are the second compendium edited by Brucker for school use, and they testify to the importance that he attached to the study of the history of philosophy in the context of the philosophical training of the young. In any case, teaching formed a constant occupation in Brucker's life, first at Kaufbeuren and then at the grammar school at Augsburg where, in spite of his ecclesiastical responsibilities, he gave lessons on the history of philosophy without payment. But the use of the discipline in university studies also had a theoretical purpose, which had been developed in the "Dissertatio praeliminaris"; in the *Institutiones* Brucker stresses the usefulness of the history of philosophy as an auxiliary science for other disciplines, and especially for philosophy because of its ability to direct the minds of the young towards the practice of true philosophy, in other words, eclecticism: "their minds are prepared in such a way that when they are led to the gardens of eclectic philosophy they know which flowers they should gather" ("Praefatio").

The *Institutiones* reflect the structure and methodological norms of the *Historia critica*. The only difference, though not a very important one, regards the parentage of the sect of the Nominalists, which is no longer traced back to Roscellinus but to his master John the Sophist "who maintained that the art of sophistry is a matter of words" (p. 440). But the premises and the origin of the dispute on universals are traced back, as in the *Historia critica*, to ancient philosophy: "Plato declared that before the creation of sensible things, there were ideas, or the universals of things, which had an essence of their own, and by participating in which things are what they are. Aristotle ridiculed these ideas and decided that the forms of things are absorbed in matter and are not essences separate from it. This was considered an error by the school of Zeno which conceded that the seminal reasons and roots of things were, indeed, within matter, but they denied them their formality and essentiality, as they call them, and taught that universals could not exist outside the intellect but that they consisted only of notions and universal terms. It is from this that the Scholastics took the terminology of universals *ante rem*, *in re*, *post rem*" (pp. 439–440).

This full and complete compendium of the *Historia critica* is contained in a single volume of 730 octavo pages, following the same order of periods, parts, books, and chapters. The book has an "Introductio" (pp. 1–9) corresponding to the "Dissertatio praeliminaris". The whole work is divided into three periods: the first, from the beginning of the world to the Roman Empire (pp. 10–234), comprises the philosophy of the "Barbarians" and the Greeks. Compared with the *Historica critica*, less space is given to the second period, from the birth of Christ to the end of Scholasticism (pp. 235–442) despite the prominence given to Neoplatonism (pp. 259–286) and medieval philosophy (pp. 395–442). Greater space is allotted to

modern philosophy, from the Reformation to the early eighteenth century (pp. 443–730), with a full discussion of the representatives of eclectic philosophy ("De restauratoribus philosophiae eclecticae universae": pp. 575–652; "De emendatione philosophiae in singulis eius partibus": pp. 653–699).

The account is divided into two stages: in the first are the biographical events, with a description of the birth and education of the philosopher, his teachers, his followers and opponents, in contrast to those writers who judged such information to be superfluous: "Those who think that the literary history of the philosophers (*historiam philosophorum literariam*) is outside their scope are greatly mistaken and have not yet grasped correctly the true nature of the history of philosophy (*veram philosophicae historiae indolem*)" ("Praefatio"). Although it is as a scholastic text, the biographical account is very detailed and is carried out with great care, and, following the plan proposed and realized in the *Historia critica*, it aims at identifying all the *circumstantiae* that may explain the temperament and characteristics of each philosopher. The philosophical teachings are then set out and gathered into systems, and the individual propositions are approximately placed within these logical connections: "We have then explained the teachings of the philosophers (*philosophorum placita*) and, in brief, their systems too, presenting them in their internal consistency, in such a way that young people will come away from their reading of this book with their minds full of philosophical concepts and opinions, and those who wish to enjoy those spirits on their own will have something with which to quench their thirst" ("Praefatio"). The notes are reduced to an essential and placed at the end of each paragraph. On the other hand, great care is taken over the indices because of the need to make them easy to consult; these are indices of authors and of subjects, covering sixteen pages in all.

8.1.9. The aims of Brucker's philosophical historiography derive from the needs and emerging demands of German philosophical culture in the first half of the eighteenth century. In the first place there was an urgent pedagogic need which, as we have seen, was constantly present in Brucker's thought and teaching of Brucker: the history of philosophy offered young people an indispensable basic preparation for every university faculty, so that it was effective not only for those who would go on to specialize in philosophical studies, but also for future theologians and jurists and for all those who would develop scientific interests. A knowledge of the history of philosophy can in fact make the young person more careful in his judgements, more free and critical in the face of recognised authorities, more certain of his faith, and more aware of the inevitable limitations of human reason. It thus becomes a tool for attaining a more liberal and unbiased culture but at the same time one firmer in its recognition of the value and truth of Christianity.

One can add to this practical task the need to give to philosophical historiography a better epistemological structure, setting out its norms and bringing to fruition the project of a "philosophical history of philosophy" formulated by Heumann in his *Acta philosophorum*. The "Dissertatio praeliminaris" of the *Historia critica* is to be read in this sense: it puts forward the appropriate theoretical and methodological elements for establishing the possibility of the history of philosophy as a science

with a specific autonomy of method and meaning in the ambit of the historical sciences. The discipline is formed on the basis of some preliminary definitions, such as those of "philosophy" and the "history of philosophy", which have the aim of setting the boundaries of the field of inquiry and indicating the true object of philosophical historiography: "it is the history of the human intellect" (*est historia intellectus humani*), but it takes shape particularly in the context of the cautionary advice, auxiliary disciplines, and methodological rules that the historian is obliged to respect; some norms are common to the other historical sciences and come from a correct application of the rules of *ars critica* and *ars historica*, while other norms belong particularly to the history of philosophy, such as the principle of reconstructing a complete system, and they require a mastery of philosophy, which means that the historian should be a philosopher. Thus, the history of philosophy is specific not only in content but also in method. It is a historical science, but the object of its research, namely philosophy, is not a pure information but rather also the condition that makes historical inquiry possible, which it supplies with the criteria and norms of reconstruction.

Brucker's importance lies not so much in his having raised some of the most important and typical questions of philosophical historiography, which had in any case been discussed by Heumann, as his having accomplished a systematic and complete work on the history of philosophy, which breaks with earlier works not only in the fullness and breadth of the material dealt with but also in the great sensitivity and care with which he confronted the critical and philosophical problems and in his clear and explicit "philosophical" approach to the history of philosophy. The accusation which, as we shall see, was made against Brucker for having written a work that lacked "philosophical spirit" should be viewed in the light of the purposes and limits that the author deliberately placed on his work, but also in the light of the results he achieved. It is true that the biographical part occupies a very particular space, and that Brucker dwells lengthily on an infinity of sometimes not very important details, which do not always seem to our eyes to have a critical foundation. However it is not conceived as a gallery of portraits and personalities whose virtues and vices are commended; on the contrary, this biographical section is intended to prepare the way for a more precise appraisal of philosophical teachings founded on the genetic study of the systems. The origin of doctrines, "the beginning, the birth, the occasion, the purpose of the teachings, and the rebuttal of adversaries" (Brucker, VI, p. 10), is nearly always carried out by resorting to reasons that have little or nothing of the philosophical about them, such as the masters that were followed or defects of character; but there is no doubt that the explanation of the systems is integrated by the discovery of historical or psychological elements often by no means without foundation. Brucker's interpretation of Scholasticism received its characteristic hallmark, as we have seen, from a constant comparison with the history of civilization and medieval institutions, and the life of each thinker is described in relation to them.

The main centre of interest is the content of the philosophical systems. And it is not by accident that Brucker's literary production began with the *Historia philosophica doctrinae de ideis*, following the model of the *historia doctrinarum,* and

not the *historia personarum,* two approaches to the history of philosophy which Brucker later attempted to combine in the *Historia critica*. At the root of the attitude, which favours the study of the doctrines rather than the persons of the philosophers, remaines the perspective of eclecticism, which, in the form handed down by Buddeus, considered the history of philosophy to be an indispensable component of philosophical research. In fact, the study of history provides an opportunity for reflection on method and for perfecting the capacity to discern and judge when making a comparison with the results, the errors, and the opinions of the past. But the "use" that the philosopher is able, and indeed ought, to make of the history of philosophy, cannot lead to a misunderstanding of the positions and teachings of the Ancients. The eclectic compares himself with those who have preceded him in the search for truth, but, for the dialogue to be fruitful, it is necessary for the interlocutor to express his own opinion in a genuine way; in other words, he needs to carry out preliminary and correct historical research aimed at a reconstruction of the teachings in their precise historical meaning. "One should not attribute one's own opinions to the philosophers", "Do not introduce greater clarity than there was historically", "The ideas of ancient philosophy should not be made to fit with our schemas": these are the fundamental rules that the historian should follow, but that the eclectic philosopher should also respect, in order to guarantee a motivated and critically based choice.

There is the problem of how to interpret systems that should define the value of the teachings. Hermeneutic criteria, valid for a reading of any kind of text, are merely the point of departure of historical work. Indeed, it is not enough to know the literal sense of the argument: one must also grasp its philosophical meaning, its own particular truth value. Thus the teachings are reconstructed as moments of a unity that is wider than that of the system: "In order to judge the teaching of the philosophers properly, it is essential to reconstruct the whole system beginning with the writings" (Brucker, I, p. 15). In carrying out this work of recomposing philosophical opinions in the correct systematic order, Brucker follows a two-fold procedure: first the statement of the *circumstantiae* makes the historical and biographical elements known that have conditioned the birth and evolution of all the components of a philosophy, such as the variety and inconsistency of the origins of Platonic thought, or the spirit of novelty for Aristotelian thought, or fanaticism for the Neoplatonists; then the historian turns himself into a philosopher in order to indicate the system in its logical structure of axioms, principles, and corollaries, walking along the speculative path which the thinker has completed, whether expressly or implicitly. Each doctrine is explained and understood from a double point of view, in the biographical and historical reasons that justify its historical appearance as a doctrine belonging to a certain philosopher or sect, and in its logical consistency with reference to the demonstrative process on which it depends or which supports it. This second type of intervention can appear *de facto* to be preferred, as it is aimed at assessing the logical and systematic value of philosophies of the past, while its particular physiognomy in the long series of theses to which every philosophy is reduced, seems to become weaker. But the study of circumstances is never forgotten, not even in the systematic part, and it surfaces here and there in

commentary on the more controversial or more important "philosophemes", where the historian wishes to explain the reasons that have driven a philosopher to formulate original doctrines or to make certain affirmations that could appear theoretically to have little foundation.[38]

Thus the meaning of the term *critica*, with which Brucker qualified his *historia philosophica*, becomes clearer. It is not merely to be understood as the application to the history of philosophy of the tools of philological criticism and hermeneutic canons; it does not only serve to explain the use of rational criticism with regard to philosophical ideas, which, in fact, the author carried out systematically in the long "Anmerkungen" of the *Kurtze Fragen* and in his commentary on the "philosophemes" in the *Historia critica*; but it refers particularly to the type of historical reconstruction proposed, which is aimed at finding the foundations (*die Gründe*, *rationes*) of doctrines, whether they are historical or psychological or eminently philosophical in nature. In this way, the history of philosophy proves to be philosophically based (*gründlich*) and it deserves the title of *historia philosophica philosophiae* according to the expression used by Heumann, in contrast to earlier histories which could only be considered *historiae philosophiae* but not *historiae philosophicae*, because of the absence in them of philosophical critera in their analysis and recomposition of the various systems.

Brucker was well aware of the novelty of his way of writing the history of philosophy. In the "Dissertatio praeliminaris" he carries out a brief review of the historians of philosophy ("Subsidia potiora auctoresque de historia philosophica": Brucker, I, pp. 31–38), firstly to indicate the texts most cited during his work, but also in order to clarify the characteristics and tendencies of philosophical historiography up to his time, in a critical comparison with his own intentions.

In this review, Brucker shows himself to be somewhat dissatisfied. His first accusation refers to the lack of systematic and complete studies of the whole history of philosophy: "The number of those who have undertaken to describe the destiny of the whole of philosophy (*universae philosophiae fata*) from its origins up to our days is certainly much lower than the dignity and value of the enterprise require". Secondly, he emphasizes the lack of judgement which the history of philosophy carries around with it like original sin. In fact, the greatest ancient historian, Diogenes Laertius, who indeed preserved for us a large part of the information and evidence we have on Greek philosophy, showed great poverty of judgement and excessive credulity in his work: "learned men have criticized him for his laziness and a certain lack of care in his attention to the real thought of the ancient philosophers, and also

[38] A proof of this is provided by the introduction of the *clinamen* into the atomistic system on the part of Epicurus; this does not have a rational justification, but can be explained by Epicurus' desire to save the contingency of the world and the liberty of man, in opposition to the Stoics: "Whence does this *clinamen* come to atoms? The cause is not explained in those of Epicurus' texts that have come down to us, nor in Gassendi [...]. He affirmed this fortuitous deviation in order to oppose Democritus' necessity, without however thinking about how the atoms could have deviated, given their necessity and the law of gravity" (Brucker, I, pp. 1264–1265).

for the poor judgement shown towards such an important subject, and an excessive credulity" (Brucker, I, pp. 31–32).

The same defects, poverty of judgement and scant critical rigour, are found again in modern philosophical historiography. After the first still faltering attempts in the Middle Ages (Burlaeus) and during the Renaissance (Vives, Morellius, Frisius, Pisaurius), the history of philosophy was studied with greater success in the seventeenth century. The work of Hornius, which had the merit of being complete, going right up to his own time, displays, however, the limitations of the author's youth ("he approached the writing of this work lacking the necessary intellectual maturity"). The learning of Vossius was very different, "since he had great literary culture", but he left us a work that is fragmentary and unfinished. Another Dutch scholar, Abraham de Grau, was led by the principle of the authority of ancient philosophy: "his aim was to write an apology of the Ancients against the accusations of the Moderns, in particular the Cartesians, [. . .] rather than to assess their teachings (*eorum placita*) impartially". The same prejudice affected the historiography of the English writer Theophilus Gale, who made philosophy go back to Holy Scripture: "he traced all Greek wisdom, not very successfully, to the Hebrew patriarchs and paid too much attention to his search for Moses in Plato" (Brucker, I, p. 36). Brucker places Stanley's *History of Philosophy* at the summit of the Anglo-Dutch historiographical trend: "He took Diogenes Laertius as his own guide, collecting together in this work what he found scattered among other authors [. . .]. But he offers a mass of historical material rather than a proper history and he does not make use either of historical judgement or philosophical judgement, but he sets out the bare words of the Ancients without submitting them to the strict examination of the truth". This criticism of Stanley, whom, however, Brucker praised in his dedication of the *Historia critica* to George II ("the first person to treat [the history of philosophy] in an adequate and complete way was Thomas Stanley, a British knight, for which he obtained immortal glory"), shows very clearly the diversity and novelty of Brucker's historical work, which was no longer on the level of a simple account of facts and opinions, but made much use of judgement, either historical or philosophical (*iudicium vel historicum vel philosophicum*) (Brucker, I, pp. 36–37).

Brucker is even more severe towards the representatives of French philosophical historiography. Huet was learned enough, but he was influenced "by many sectarian prejudices and hypotheses"; Hubert Gautier, on the contrary, displayed a superficial culture, while the *Discursus philosophicus*, attributed at first to Pierre-Sylvain Régis and later to Pierre Coste (Brucker, I, p. 37; VI, pp. 27–28), did not have the dimensions of a true history ("he offered an essay on how the history of philosophy should be treated rather than a true history"). But the least successful work appeared to be Deslandes' *Histoire critique*. After the publication of the fourth volume of the work (1756) and the death of the author, Brucker responded to the criticisms that the French historian had made of him, boldly citing the opinions expressed by Kahle, Formey, Voltaire, and other authors of the *Encyclopédie* who had preferred his *Historia*: "As this is the unanimous opinion of the learned world, we are not surprised that the author, following the customs of men such as himself, should have reacted so badly to our judgement on his book as to choose to attack our history of

philosophy violently and discredit it with howls of anger, rather than make a careful examination, at least of a part of it, and demonstrate with proper reasons what there is to criticize. But this was impossible since he lacked the necessary cultural background, as can easily be confirmed by reading his book, which is so shameless and stupid that not even children would be forgiven for such errors and negligence" (VI, p. 28). He describes Deslandes as a *scriptor miserabilis*, dangerous to the faith, and unworthy of the name scholar.

As he goes on to speak of Germany, the panorama of philosophical historiography becomes much more interesting from Brucker's point of view. Eclectic research into philosophizing brought with it a renewal of historical research: "Finally, in German scholarship, after philosophy had been corrected and reformed at the beginning of this century, the study of the history of philosophy was also greatly encouraged, while previously it had for the most part been neglected" (Brucker, I, pp. 37–38). Brucker recognizes in the theoretical premises of the eclecticism of Ch. Thomasius and Buddeus and in the cultural climate of the anti-Scholastic revolt which, starting from Halle, had pervaded all the German universities in the earlier decades of the century, the premises for his own historiography too. Christian Thomasius, Gundling, Zierold, Buddeus, and Gentzken undertook their studies on the history of philosophy with sufficient initial tools, in accordance with the laws of the art of philology and the art of history (*ad leges artis criticae et historiae*), but above all they made much use of "philosophical judgement". Nevertheless, they restricted themselves to drawing up summaries which "served more for the studies of young than for extending this most useful science" (Brucker, VI, p. 30). Heumann formulated the wider plan of creating a complete edifice of philosophical history, but he offered only the beginnings of the science in his *Acta philosophorum*.

Brucker was convinced that he had accomplished a work that was in many aspects was and better than those of his predecessors. He followed the tradition of German historiography, but worked on a broader level, with a more rigorous historical and critical method and a constant concern to offer a picture of the whole history of philosophy, from the origins to modern times, an exhaustive history that included all the teachings on it that have been handed down to us. But above all, his intention was to produce a *historia philosophica* in which, as Heumann had intended, philosophy would not only be an object of research but would also involve the criterion of unifying and of reconstructing the historical elements.

The *Historia critica* did indeed appear as something new to the eyes of contemporaries, and it was received with much interest. The work was read and appreciated first of all in Germany, where the *Nova acta eruditorum* of Leipzig, which had published the reviews of nearly all of Brucker's writings on the history of philosophy, said of the *Historia critica*: "We believe that there is no one in the world of learning who would not understand how much profit both literary culture and religious culture may gain from this book alone by the celebrated author, and how this very learned man has distinguished himself in publishing a book whose contents are important, agreeable, useful, and up till now neglected and therefore almost new, treated with honesty of spirit and intelligence and at the same time adorned with surpassing verbal and stylistic elegance" (NAE, 1744, p. 210). It is true that some

disproportions and differences of method can be noted ("It is not all written with the same order and sequence nor with a single method and one criterion of exposition, nor with a correct proportion between the subjects treated"). But Brucker's objectivity and the seriousness of the historical work that he had completed are emphasized: "He adds for his own part a notable search for the truth and an extraordinary sincerity towards historical reliability; for this reason he is not ashamed of modifying his previous opinion whenever truth demanded it or new light obliged him to do so" (NAE, 1745, pp. 212–213).[39] The *Bibliothèque Germanique* expressed itself in the same tone on the *Kurtze Fragen*: "The material is abundant and certainly used well. Hardly anything escapes this tireless author. Everything is full of observations and fascinating discoveries, which make reading the book very agreeable and useful" (BG, XXVII [1733], p. 119). What was most satisfactory was the method of expounding the philosophical doctrines: "Although a work like this requires a prodigious amount of reading, yet the tireless erudition is not the only thing that strikes one about this author. One never ceases to admire in his works the skill with which he has managed to explain the opinions of the ancient philosophers, who very often seem intent on not making themselves understood, the clarity with which he expounds their principles, and above all, the care with which he shows the links and agreement between the various parts of each philosophy. Everywhere one sees a man who is master of his subject and who gives to the material treated a style and an order that make his books agreeable and instructive for the reader" (BG, XXX [1734], p. 108).

A sign of interest in the *Historia critica*, which continued throughout the second half of the eighteenth century, was the republication of Walch's *Philosophisches Lexicon*, edited by J.C. Hennings, in 1775, which contained in an appendix an outline of the history of philosophy taken from Brucker's work: "Anhang aus Jacob Bruckers Historia critica philosophiae, nebst einigen Zusätzen", in J.G. Walch, *Philosophisches Lexicon [. . ..] mit einer Kurtzen kritischen Geschichte der Philosophie versehen* (Leipzig, 1775[4]; facs. repr. Hildesheim, 1968), Vol. II, cols. 1745–1804. In this way the author intended to complete the *Lexicon*, which could not by its nature deal specifically with the persons of the philosophers and with their sects, using tables describing the succession of the schools and their representatives in a systematic order (*in systematischer Ordnung*). [40]

---

[39] When, once again for the *Acta eruditorum*, Heumann reviewed the volumes of the *Kurtze Fragen*, he emphasized the completeness of the documentation gathered by Brucker and his systematic use of historical criticism: "He also corroborates the subjects that he expounds with the testimonies of the best writers, after consulting recent, and also contemporary, writers who have seriously studied this kind of history. In fact, he never displays credulity but examines everything in the correct way. Thus he throws doubt on many things that up to now were considered as very sure, and he rejects from among the myths many stories that very learned men previously believed" (AE, 1731, p. 559). Further on he praised Brucker's work as one written "very carefully and with the most refined judgement", as the first *Historia philosophica* to be completed "something that had not previously been done by any of the learned men" (NAE Suppl., I, p. 124; II, p. 427).

[40] The publishing of charts or mnemonic tables for the *Historia critica* had been requested of Brucker himself, especially by Italian scholars (*maxime apud Italos*). In response to this demand, as

Even more noteworthy is the fact that the *Historia critica* was known to Kant who expressly cites it in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, in the first book of the *Transcendental Dialectic*, when, speaking of Plato's ideas, he states the hermeneutic principle of understanding an author "better than he has understood himself": "The Republic of Plato has become proverbial as a striking example of a supposedly visionary perfection, such as can exist only in the brain of the idle thinker; and Brucker has rediculed the philosopher for asserting that a prince can rule well only in so far has he partecipates in the ideas. We should, however, be better advised to follow up this thought, and, where the great philosopher leaves us without help, to place it, through fresh efforts, in a proper light, rather than to set it aside as useless on the very sorry and harmful pretext of its impracticability" (I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. N. Kemp Smith (Basingstoke and London, 1929), A316/B372–373. For a comparison, see Brucker, I, p. 726). This is the only passage in Kant's published works where he cites Brucker, but in reality, Kant drew a large part of his knowledge of ancient philosophy from the *Historia critica*. In particular, it has been shown that "Kant's interpretation of Plato and Platonic philosophy [. . .] is not based on a study of Plato's original philosophy, but derives substantially from Brucker's work on the history of philosophy".[41] The *Historia critica* is thus still important today for the study of the origin of criticism, considering the centrality and speculative fruitfulness of Kant's references to Platonism in his writings, from the *Dissertation* of 1770 to the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Critique of Judgement*.

The success of the *Historia critica* in other countries and its spread beyond restricted learned circles and the academic world are also connected with the numerous summaries, often written in the various national languages. One of the most famous was the work of Jean-Henri-Samuel Formey (1711–1797), from 1748 permanent secretary of the Royal Academy of Berlin, *Histoire abrégée de la philosophie* (Amsterdam, 1760). [42] While he praised Brucker's work, "one of the

---

an appendix at the end of Vol. VI there is a "Tabula mnemonica", apparently by an author unknown to Brucker himself ("he was not identified to us except by the initials of his name I.C.B"). There is also a mention (*Historia critica*, VI, pp. 32–33) of six tables "engraved on copper and also coloured to make them easier to memorize" by the engraver Matthäus Seuterus: *Philosophiae universae origines et successiones a mundi ortu ad praesens seculum iuxta observationes recentissimas, quas in Historia critica philosophiae excussit Jacobus Bruckerus succincte Diatyposi aere exhibitas* (Augsburg, 1753).

[41] G. Mollowitz, "Kants Platoauffassung", *Kantstudien*, XL (1935), p. 18. For Mollowitz, three aspects of Platonism that Kant inferred from Brucker were of importance: 1. The distinction between the sensible world and the intelligible world; 2. The Platonic notion of idea, in the double sense of the object of the intellectual intuition of God, and archetype of sensible things; and 3. The difference between human and divine knowledge.

[42] The *Histoire abrégée* is divided into three books, corresponding to the three periods of Brucker's history: 1. "Depuis la création du monde, jusqu'à la fondation de Rome", pp. 29–153; 2. "Depuis la fondation de Rome jusqu'au rétablissement des Lettres", pp. 154–204; 3. "Depuis le rétablissement des lettres jusqu'à présent", pp. 205–320. The work is preceded by an "Introduction", pp. 9–26, in which the author explains the concept of philosophy and the criteria that he intends to follow.

productions that will do most honour to this century and from which posterity will draw the greatest benefit", Formey despised Deslandes, accusing him of provincialism and atheism, and by producing his *abrégé* he intended to restrict the circulation of the *Histoire critique*. Many of Brucker's criticisms of Deslandes in Vol. VI of the *Historia critica* came in fact from this book by Formey, which ridiculed the French historian, "an author so small-minded" as to criticise "the most learned of his contemporaries". At the same time he sought to adapt the *Historia critica* to the needs of a wider public, for the moderately cultured man, for whom a knowledge of history of philosophy was important but could not become his one centre of interest: "So I judge that a moderately cultivated person, of any class or profession, should not be ignorant of the history of philosophy, but that it should be enough for him to know as much about it as he does about ordinary history, not being concerned to know all the details, which he leaves to the professional historians. Otherwise, if all our branches of knowledge had to be equally complete, several lives would not be enough" (Formey, *Histoire abrégée*, pp. 16–17).

Perhaps the most notable use made of the *Historia critica* was the work accomplished by the Encyclopaedists. In order to emphasize the originality of Diderot's contribution in drawing up the articles on the history for philosophy for the *Encyclopédie*, his disciple Naigeon later tried to discredit the work done by the German historian, together with that of Stanley.[43] But these articles are to a large extent summaries or extracts from the *Historia critica*, as is openly acknowledged at the beginning of the article on *Aristotelianism*: "The author believed that he could scatter around various passages from Deslandes's work, amounting to about a tenth of this long article; the remainder is a long extract, substantial and well-reasoned, from the Latin history of philosophy by Brucker; this is a modern work, highly thought of by foreigners, little known in France and which has been extensively used for the philosophical part of the *Encyclopédie*, as in the article *Arabs* and in a very large number of others"(*Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (Lucca, 1758[2]), Vol. I, p. 571).[44]

The choice of the *Historia critica* can certainly be attributed to the recognized seriousness of Brucker's historical studies, to the breadth of the sources used, and to the attention given to the references, even though "historical exactness" was not the

---

The *Histoire abrégée* was soon translated into English: *A Concise History of Philosophy* (London, 1766).

[43] J.A. Naigeon, *Philosophie ancienne et moderne* (Paris, 1791), Vol. I, p. x: "On est étonné, sans doute, que l'énorme compilation de Brucker et de Stanley n'apprenne au fond que fort peu de choses, qu'on sauroit même mieux, et avec moins de peine et d'ennui, en consultant les sources [...]. Tant de passages accumulés, tant d'expériences réunies, lorsque l'esprit philosophique n'a pas guidé le savant, et éclairé le pas de l'osservateur, ne prouvent souvent que la patience de l'un et les petites vues de l'autre".

[44] Casini managed to identify 43 articles in the *Encyclopédie* drawn almost entirely from the *Historia critica*; among them: "Antediluvians", "Arabs", "Chaldeans", "Chinese", "Eclecticism", "Eleatics", "Epicureanism", "Hobbesism", "Ionic", "Bruno", "Leibnizianism", "Locke", "Megaric", "Peripatetic", "Platonism", "Pyrrhonism", "Pythagorism", "Scholastics", "Socratic", "Stoicism", "Thomas Aquinas" (cf. Casini, *Diderot "philosophe"*, p. 259).

main objective of the *Encyclopédie*'s articles on the history of philosophy, which, on the contrary, answered a double purpose. In the first place they aimed to expound sensistic and materialistic ideas in the field of philosophy, and at the same time to carry out a radical criticism of religion.[45] Brucker provided the framework of the discussion, the historical material into which the reflections, the personal ideas and the doubts of Diderot were then grafted: "In the *Encyclopédie* there are only two speakers. Brucker, the learned and pious historian, provides the framework of the discussion. Diderot listens, sometimes he misunderstands, he cuts him short when he is bored, he emphasizes his intellectual wit, or grafts his own *rêveries* on to his reflections. To sum up, as Naigeon recognised openly, Diderot lent to ancient as well as modern philosophers 'his own ideas, his own reflections, his own conjectures, his very own doubts', and there is no need to look for rigorous accuracy in his history of philosophy" (Proust, *Diderot et l'Encyclopédie*, p. 265).

Leaving aside the use that Diderot made of the *Historia critica*, the fact remains that many of Brucker's theories and ideas received an interest and importance they had not previously known, partly because of the more brilliant, less heavy and scholastic, popular and not erudite, tone with which they are presented in the pages of the *Encyclopédie*: "The compiler generally limits himself to summarizing Brucker's text in a brilliant and fluent French, just keeping the essential framework [...]. Comparing each article with the original essay, one can verify that Diderot's work was essentially an intelligent summary" (Casini, *Diderot "philosophe"*, p. 258). The effect was to make known the image of Brucker as a rationalist Enlightenment historian, because of his anti-Scholastic and anti-Catholic polemic, his criticism of the religious superstitions of paganism, his glorification of eclecticism or of the autonomy and freedom of philosophical research, and the affirmation of the superiority of modern over ancient thought, all elements, however, that he had inherited from the tradition of Buddeus and Ch. Thomasius, which was not at all anti-religious or heterodox.

Brucker's affinity with Enlightenment rationalism was taken up by the *Mémoires de Trévoux*, the famous Jesuit review, as a negative feature of his work: "The author of this work treats his material with a sort of religious veneration. When the question of the restoration of philosophy is posed, Brucker regards this event as an effect of divine mercy towards mankind: we do not condemn this way of thinking, but we prefer to reserve it for revealed religion, which the world cannot do without, and not for philosophy, which is an ornament, a decoration, an extra good work, which perhaps has not introduced any additional step of true wisdom into people's way of life. This sort of progress is the business of the Gospel only" (MT, 1754, T. II, pp. 1778–1779).

---

[45] According to Proust, there is no substantial difference between the historico-philosophical and philosophical articles of the *Encyclopédie*: "La différence qui les sépare est formelle. L'exposé des systèmes philosophiques ou religieux des anciens n'est qu'un moyen habile de répandre le pyrrhonisme, l'athéisme, et le matérialisme. Les articles non historiques ont pour rôle d'exprimer en termes clairs les idées à peine dissimulées ailleurs sous le voile de ce qu'on pourrait appeler l'allégorie historique" (Proust, *Diderot et l'Encyclopédie*, p. 264).

The circulation and knowledge of Brucker's works began in Italy many years before the publication of the *Encyclopédie*. The *Historia philosophica de ideis* was already known to Vico, who cited it in *The New Science* (1744): "our Science is therefore a history of human ideas, on which it seems the metaphysics of human mind must proceed. This queen of the sciences, by the axiom that 'the sciences must begin where their subject matters began', took its start when the first men began to think humanly, and not from when the philosophers began to reflect on human ideas (as in an erudite and scholarly little book recently published under the title *Historia philosophica doctrinae de ideis*, which comes down to the latest controversies between the two foremost minds of our age, Leibniz and Newton)". [46] The *Historia de ideis* was also the starting point for the university courses on metaphysics held by Antonio Genovesi and was extensively used in the "Disputatio physico-historica de rerum corporearum origine et constitutione", foreword to the Neapolitan edition of the *Elementa physicae* by the Dutch writer Peter van Musschenbroek.[47]

There is an interesting clue to the diffusion of the *Historia critica* in Italy in the last letter which Brucker sent to Muratori (26th June, 1748), in which Brucker speaks of how he has finally received the three copies of the *Historia critica* which he had requested from the Leipzig publisher and which he will now send by a friend to Venice: one of these copies is for Muratori himself, at a good price, Brucker adds (*Edizione nazionale del carteggio di L.A. Muratori*, Vol. 10/II, p. 251). Another clue to the interest in the *Historia critica* in Italy can be seen in the review in parts, requested by the readers in the *Giornale de' Letterati* published at Florence: "However, it seems to us that Mr. Brucker should not deny that he has read a vast number of books, which he cites in putting together his *History of Philosophy*. He is very accurate in fixing the various periods of the birth and death of the philosophers, in referring to the editions of their works, in referring to the judgements that have been made by other scholars previously on the Philosophers and their opinions. He also shows himself to be well versed in the secret history of philosophical scholars (*nella Historia recondita de' Letterati filosofi*), as was Bayle, although expressed with less depth and discretion" (GLF, T. VI, Part IV [1753], pp. 84–85). However, the journal also points out the defects of the *Historia critica*, which is concerned

[46] G.B. Vico, *The New Science*, translated from the third Edition (1744) by T.G. Bergin and M.H. Fisch (Ithaca, N.Y., 1948), § 347, p. 92. Mentioned again in G.B. Vico, *L'autobiografia. Il carteggio e le poesie varie*, eds. B. Croce and F. Nicolini (Bari, 1929^2), p. 256. A lively criticism of the *Historia doctrinae de ideis* can be found in the Platonist Paolo Mattia Doria (cf. above, Chapter 4, Introduction), who was linked to Vico by friendship and by cultural interests: P.M. Doria, *Difesa della metafisica degli antichi filosofi contro il signor Locke ed alcuni altri moderni autori* (Venice, 1732), "Prefazione": "I again question the book by an anonymous author, entitled the *Historia philosophica de ideis*: and I question it because although he may protest that he does not wish to do other than write the history of those authors who discussed the subject of ideas, in one place he gives the impression that he is favourable to the Sensists and against Plato".

[47] Cf. above, Chapter 4, Introduction; P. Zambelli (*La formazione filosofica di Antonio Genovesi*, pp. 378–379) points out the analogy of the notion of "eclecticism" in Genovesi and in the Encyclopaedists, explained by their common reference to the Thomasius-Buddeus-Brucker current.

at too great a length with biographical details, explains the teachings in a fragmentary way, dividing them into many axioms ("and with these little snippets of a few lines, hardly connected with each other, he thinks that he can print the idea of that philosophy in the mind of the reader"). Moreover, it expresses opinions that are too general and therefore superficial, it gives little importance to scientific discoveries and scientists, while "it tracks down every author, however obscure or insignificant, who may have explained Logic, Metaphysics, or Natural Law". [48]

A direct influence of the *Historia critica* can be found in the writings of the Celestine Father Appiano Buonafede, known under the pseudonym of Agatopisto Cromaziano (1716–1793): *Della istoria e della indole di ogni filosofia*, 7 Vols. (Lucca, 1766–1781), from the beginning of the world up to the fifteenth century, and *Della Restaurazione di ogni filosofia ne' secoli XVI, XVII e XVIII*, 3 Vols. (Venice, 1786–1789), from the Renaissance up to Genovesi. These works, often considered, following Croce's opinion, to be poor in content and of no interest, [49] enjoyed a certain amount of success at the end of the century, and the latter enjoyed the privilege of a German translation by the Kantian K.H. Heydenreich.[50] Buonafede was certainly not an original historian, but nor was he a simple compiler, since he showed freedom in his opinions and was often critical towards previous historians, from whom he drew a great deal of his information: "and so I have taken advice to write this *History of Philosophy* of mine, and in it I shall use, not with my eyes closed but as shrewdly as I can, the information and discoveries of the learned men praised in this preface, and of others too whom I have left out. And I shall make use above all of the wonderful compilation by the good Brucker, pointing out, however, and correcting as far as my weakness makes it possible, his most serious blunders, especially in the very important matter of religion" (Buonafede, *Della istoria e della indole*, Vol. I, "Prefazione", pp. xxxvi–xxxvii. It must be remembered that Brucker's *Historia critica* had been placed on the *Index librorum prohibitorum* with a decree of the 28th July, 1755, together with two of Voltaire's books and three anonymous works). In particular, Buonafede accused Brucker of wanting "to find atheists everywhere", with the result that he exalted precisely that atheism that he said he was fighting.

[48] GLF, T. VI, Part iv (1753), p. 88. This attitude is traced back to the intelligence of the Germans: "Bear in mind that in this country studies on logic and metaphysics are more in vogue than those on physics and mathematics, otherwise, the omissions made by Mr. Brucker would be less excusable" (p. 89).

[49] "Agatopisto Cromaziano, or Appiano Buonafede, achieves a strange mixture of the erudition of Brucker and the lighter tones of Voltaire: strange, because he was a friar and 'Voltairized' in the name of the faith and the Church" (B. Croce, *Storia della storiografia italiana nel secolo decimonono* (Bari, 1921), Vol. I, p. 286). Garin speaks of "a not always successful compilation based principally on Brucker's *Historia critica philosophiae*, often badly cobbled together" (Garin, III, p. 1000).

[50] A. Cromaziano, *Kritische Geschichte der Revolutionen der Philosophie in den drey letzen Jahrhunderten. Aus dem Italianischen mit prüfunden Anmerkungen und einem Anhange über die Kantische Revolution versehen* von K.H. Heydenreich, 2 Vols. (Leipzig, 1791).

Secondly, he perceived "a clear attitude of bias" which made the merits of German and Protestant authors appear greater, to the detriment of those from other countries: "and he is too generous in speaking of German philosophy, and rather mean about that of other countries, and extremely mean about the excellent men of Italy, which, to tell the truth, envies neither Wittenberg nor Leipzig" (*Della istoria*, I, p. xxxvi).

Buonafede took from the *Historia critica* the material and the framework of his history but he often dissociated himself from the interpretation. Thus, on Scholasticism he rejected Brucker's tendency to look for the genealogy of the "Scholastic bird" as far back as Augustine and Boethius; he preferred to make a distinction, "with the authority of history", between an "immoderate" Scholasticism (Berengarius of Tours, Almaric of Bène, Roscelin of Compiègne, Abelard) of which Brucker's criticisms were valid, and a "moderate" Scholasticism (Anselm, Bernard, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure) of which they were unjust: "it is the truth that true Christianity still had *scholastici moderati*, who criticised those excesses, and used reason and philosophy, as one could in those days in deference, in servitude and in defence of religion, of the church, and of the pastors who were targeted by the *scholastica intemperante*" (*Della istoria*, VI, p. 60).

A study of the fortune of Brucker's work could be written for almost all the European countries, where the *Historia critica* was read and appreciated as a complete and impartial historical work, even if Brucker's point of view was not always shared. Examples can be given of its circulation in two other countries with different cultural traditions, namely Portugal and England. In the eighteenth century there was a re-flowering of historical studies in Portugal once the country had opened itself up to the liveliest currents of European thought. Modern Portuguese philosophical historiography was born in this period. It found its model and guiding text in the *Historia critica*, as is shown by the history of logic by the Franciscan Manuel do Cenáculo,[51] considered to be the founder of this type of study in Portugal: *Conclusiones philosophicae critico-rationales de historia logicae, eius proemialibus, ente rationis, et universalibus in communi* (Coimbra, 1751; Portugese trans., beside the Latin text, in Gama Caeiro, *Frei Manuel do Cenáculo*, pp. 185–219; we refer here to this modern edition).[52] The philosophical perspective

[51] Cf. Pereira Gomes, *Os começos*, p. 28. Manuel do Cenáculo Vilas Boas (1724–1814), after receiving a doctorate at Coimbra, travelled in 1749 to Rome, where he probably came to know Brucker's work. A friend of the Marquis of Pombal, whose school reforms he inspired, he was bishop of Beja and then archbishop of Évora, where he founded a large public library. Cf. F. da Gama Caeiro, *Frei Manuel do Cenáculo, Aspectos da sua actuação filosófica* (Lisboa, 1959); J. Marcadé, *Frei Manuel de Cenáculo Vilas Boas, évêque de Beja, archevêque d'Évora (1770–1814)* (Paris, 1978); J.A. Gomes Machado, *Un coleccionador português do sêculo das luzes: D. Frei Manuel do Cenáculo, Arcebispo de Évora* (Évora, 1987); *Frei Manuel do Cenáculo, construtor de bibliotecas*, eds. F.A.L. Vaz and J.A. Calixto (Casal de Cambra, 2006).

[52] The work is divided into five parts, the first two of which are specifically historical: "Pars prima: origines, fata et incrementa logicae expendens"; "Pars secunda: fertur iudicium de praeexplicatarum sectarum logicali doctrina" (Gama Caeiro, *Frei Manuel do Cenáculo*, pp. 186–196 and 197–206).

of this Franciscan author, who was obviously a follower of Duns Scotus, is far from Brucker's eclecticism. He did not share his glorification of modern philosophy and contempt for Scholasticism: "the eclectic philosophical method, in so far as it refuses to respect authority, antiquity and so on, should be followed with caution. The sectarian way, on the other hand, can be followed more safely, as it is well armed and protected by authority, by antiquity, and by solid and effective reasons, unless arguments of equal weight appear on the other side" (Gama Caeiro, *Frei Manuel do Cenáculo*, p. 203). This reservation notwithstanding, he drew much of his historical information from the *Historia critica*, taking care however to turn many of Brucker's statements on their heads.[53]

Cenáculo's reading of the *Historia critica* was not only guided by his polemic intention, to defend Scholastic Catholicism. There was also his awareness of the positive function that historical learning could exercise in philosophical culture, especially that of young people. In fact, the same Cenáculo was later responsible for the publication of a brief summary of the *Historia critica* in order to promote its popularization: *Synopsis historiae philosophiae secundum ordinem Bruckerianum* (Lisboa, 1773), which repeats word for word the *Tabula mnemonica* that appeared in an appendix to Vol. VI of the *Historia critica*, and contains just two supplements: the first (pp. 8–12) aims to illustrate the meaning of the division of Greek philosophy into sects and the origin of the name; and the second at the end of the complete work, contains a eulogy of philosophy ("it should be directed towards blessedness, for the love of which it was instituted, as we have shown above": p. 51).

In the last decade of the eighteenth century, half a century after the first edition, a final compendium of the *Historia critica* appeared, the work of the English clergyman William Enfield: *The History of Philosophy from the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the Present Century; drawn up from Brucker's Historia Critica Philosophiae*, 2 Vols. (London, 1791; other editions: Dublin, 1792; London, 1819; London, 1837).[54] Enfield lamented the inadequacy of English writing in this field,

---

[53] We recall as an example the criticism made of Ch. Thomasius: "The question of the number of the operations of the mind is by no means without value. The very first principle is not this: whatever things accord with human reason, that is with the senses and ideas, are true, while those that do not accord are false" (Gama Caeiro, *Frei Manuel do Cenáculo*, p. 204). Brucker had written: "The question of the number of the operations of the mind is obscure and pointless. This is the very first principle: whatever things accord with human reason, that is with the senses and ideas, are true, while those that do not accord are false" (Brucker, V, p. 493).

[54] The first volume contains, as well as the "Preface", a schema summarizing the topics ("An epitome of the history of philosophy", pp. xiii–xxvii), some observations on the usefulness and the method of the history of philosophy ("Preliminary observations", pp. 2–13), and the first period (pp. 14–503). The second volume sets out the other two periods (II, pp. 1–618) with an *Appendix* on the non-European peoples ("Hints relative to the modern state of philosophy in Asia", II, pp. 619–628). William Enfield (1741–1797) was rector of the academies at Warrington and Norwich. Among his works – as well as commemorative addresses, collectios of prayers and sermons – are: *An Essay towards the History of Liverpool*, 1773; *The Speaker, or Miscellaneous Pieces collected from the Best English Writers*, 1774; *Discourse on the Progress of Religion and Christian Knowledge*, 1780; *Institutes of Natural Philosophy*, 1785. Cf. DNB, II, pp. 787–788.

if one excepted Stanley's *History of Philosophy*, which was already outdated: "A British student, who, in his search after truth, should be desirous of taking a general survey of the rise and progress of opinions on the more important subjects of speculation, and by a fair comparison of different systems, to draw legitimate conclusions for himself, would seek in vain for the necessary information in any English work" ("Preface", p. iii). Brucker, on the other hand, was respected as an impartial historian, erudite and scrupulous in the information he gave: "His work bears throughout such evident marks of diligent attention, cool judgement, and freedom from prejudice, as justly to entitle even his opinions to no small degree of respect; but as far as concerns facts, perhaps no historian ever had a better claim to confidence" ("Preface", pp. vii–viii)

The purpose of the history of philosophy, which for Brucker was to illustrate "the history of the human mind" was understood by Enfield in the sense of Lockean epistemology, that is, to establish the conditions, limits, and progress of human understanding: "The history of philosophy is a register of experiments to ascertain the strength of the human understanding"; and a little further on: "Perhaps, too, men's research into these subjects, has now been carried to such extent, and every argument upon it has been so thoroughly discussed, that it may be possible to determine with sufficient precision *how far* it is possible for the human mind to proceed in the investigation of truth, and *why* it can proceed no further. Possibly the time may not be far distant, when an end will be put to fruitless controversy, by distinctly ascertaining the limits of the human understanding" ("Preface", pp. viii–x).

During the years in which Enfield's summary was appearing in England, Brucker was ceasing, at least in Germany, to be considered a modern writer, and his work was being replaced, as a source of reference and for reading, by more up-to-date histories of philosophy that reflected the *fin de siècle* philosophical climate dominated by Kantism. By now, less enthusiastic opinions were being expressed on the *Historia critica*, and Dietrich Tiedemann, in his *Geist der spekulativen Philosophie* (Marburg, 1791–1797, Vol. VI, "Preface", p. iv), reproached his contemporaries for believing that nothing had been done in the area of the history of philosophy since Brucker, and that the *Historia critica* represented the norm for every good history.

This indifference was particularly noticeable on the part of historians inspired by Kantism, who, strong in their "theoretical" superiority, detected in Brucker a fundamental lack of "philosophical spirit". Tennemann, it is true, recognized that Brucker was very important in the development of the genre of the "history of philosophy" for having produced its first complete systemization: "In the literature of the history of philosophy, Brucker's work marked a new epoch, not only because of his detailed study of the sources or because he was the first to devise the method, but also because he very carefully gathered together all the work that had been done on the history of philosophy up to his time". Yet immediately afterwards he declares: "Despite the insight that he displays, he does not possess sufficient philosophical spirit; his idea of philosophy was too uncertain and indefinite to provide a sure point of view and a precise plan for a history of it. Yet despite these shortcomings, it is the first complete work on the history of philosophy that deserves to be described as such" (W.G. Tennemann, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, I, Leipzig,

1798, p. lvi).[55] Tennemann was simply repeating an opinion that was widespread in the historiographical culture of his time, and one that would form the basis for Hegel's interpretation of Brucker, namely that Brucker was not a philosopher but a scholar: the *Historia critica* lacked cohesion and a consistent and aware philosophical system which was the only way to illuminate the amorphous set of historical sources.[56]

Respect for Brucker lasted longer in French culture. Degérando considered him to be "the first person to have set out this vast subject in all its associations and in all its details; he collected all the facts, explained all the opinions, and cited all the sources. The mind boggles at the thought of the huge amount of effort that such a work must have entailed, the most complete and wide ranging work that we possess [. . .]. [Brucker] must be the first guide for those who undertake this kind of study" (Degérando, *Histoire comparée des systèmes philosophiques*, Vol. I, pp. 59–60).

The time was now ripe for a comprehensive interpretation of the significance of Brucker's historiography, one that would determine the theoretical assumptions and the sources of his work. The first serious attempt was made by Victor Cousin, in the twelfth lesson of his *Cours de philosophie. Introduction à l'histoire de la philosophie* (Brussels, 1836), pp. 344–382. There are two conditions for the birth of philosophical historiography: a philosophical system that has reached full maturity, and an abundance of historical material gathered by the work of scholars. Cartesian philosophy conformed to the first of these conditions: it was received and taken to extreme results by Wolff, in whose work everything proceeds by principles and axioms, by definitions and corollaries. Thus Germany, where interest in historical and erudite studies had never ceased, had to be the place where the first great history of philosophy in modern days would appear, towards the middle of the eighteenth century: "Brucker is the representative of the first movement of modern philosophy in the history of philosophy. Herein lie his merits and his defects".[57] The merits of

[55] In the manual based on the *Geschichte der Philosophie* Tennemann distinguished three periods in modern philosophical historiography, the first from Bayle to Leibniz, the second from Brucker to Kant, the third after Kant. In the period characterized by Brucker "philology and criticism improved the materials collected; some imperfections of the works of preceding age were corrected, and the science assumed more elevated pretensions"; in the third period the writers worked on perfecting the theory and method and they reached a more appropriate way of exposition "under the influence, more or less sensible, of a philosophical system" (Tennemann, I, p. 15).

[56] Buhle's opinion confirms this type of assessment, which was stated in the age of Kant: "Er hat zwar die Geschichte der Philosophie mit dem Auge eines Literators angesehen, und aus diesem Geschichtspuncte behandelt" (J.G. Buhle, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie und einer kritischen Literatur derselben*, Vol. I, Göttingen, 1796, p. 8). Cf. Gumposch, p. 223: "An Fleiss hat diesen Mann nicht leicht Jemand übertroffen. Und wie ihn seine Zeitgenossen durch Aufnahme in die Berliner Akademie, Leipziger deutsche Gesellschaft u.s.w. geehrt, so nennt man noch jetzt seine Werke dankbar als Materialiensammlungen. Zur richtigen Würdigung der philosophischen Systeme fehlte ihm aber die nöthige Geistesfreiheit".

[57] Cousin, *Cours de philosophie*, p. 355 (English transl., p. 234). Cousin formulated the link between philosophy and the history of philosophy in a general law: "A great philosophical movement is then the indispensable condition, and at the same time the certain principle of an equal

the *Historia critica* consist of its choice of chronological order and its completeness, regarding both the vastness of the material and the abundance of sources consulted, and the amount of reading done. The faults are the result of an excess of the better qualities (*Brucker est complet, mais il l'est avec luxe*). He goes back to before the Flood, not separating clearly the theological elements from the occasional philosophical points that are closely connected with the beginnings of humanity, and showing here and there the interest of a scholar rather than a critical capacity. The chronological order is understood in an extrinsic way with a wholly Wolffian rigour that "shows us that Brucker is in the history of philosophy a representative of a school of geometrians" (*Cours de philosophie*, p. 356; English transl., p. 235). He sees a casual, not a temporal, juxtaposition in the sequence of systems.

By relating Brucker's philosophical historiography to the development of modern philosophy, Cousin gives it an emphasis that goes beyond its concrete merits and faults. It becomes the first historical expression of the revolution that produced modern philosophy in its separation from the Middle Ages, the first real history of philosophy in the modern era: "To sum up, in the history of philosophy Brucker represents the first revolution that snatched philosophy out of the Middle Ages; this first revolution, so glorious for the human spirit, gave rise to modern philosophy, but it has not ended it. In the same way, the *Historia critica philosophiae* is a monument, admirable for its vastness, its erudition, and its apparent clarity; but it is not, nor could it be, the final expression of the history of philosophy. Brucker, a pupil of the seventeenth century, flourished at the beginning and in the middle of the eighteenth century. Brucker is the father of modern history of philosophy, as Descartes is the father of modern philosophy (*Cours de philosophie*, p. 358; English transl., p. 236).

The evaluation of Brucker's work given in the *Dictionnaire des sciences philosophiques*, Vol. I (Paris, 1844), pp. 385–389, under the heading "Brucker", and edited by Ch. Bénard, is largely based on Cousin: "History of philosophy is a modern science and Brucker is its first serious representative".[58] After listing Brucker's exceptional qualities of seriousness, erudition, and intellectual freedom, he shows his limitations, which, following an opinion that Tennemann had already expressed, are traced back to inadequate philosophical awareness and preparation: "What is lacking in Brucker is above all that he is not enough of a philosopher (*il n'est pas assez philosophe*); he does not know how to follow a system in its organic development, in its methods, and in its principles and consequences. This

---

in the history of philosophy. Every great speculative movement contains in itself, and sooner or later produces necessarily, its history of philosophy, and even a history of philosophy which is conformed to it" (pp. 346–347; English transl., p. 230). Hence the three great German histories of philosphy of the 18th century are related to the three philosophies that characterize modern thought: Cartesian rationalism (Brucker), empiricism (Tiedemann), Kantism (Tennemann).

[58] DSPh, p. 386. The sources of Brucker's historiography are found in Bayle's "critique" and in Leibnizian philosophy: "Si on veut indiquer les vrais fondateurs de l'histoire de la philosophie, c'est à Bayle et à Leibniz que ce titre doit être décerné. Le premier a mis au monde la critique et le second a tracé le plan de la nouvelle science; Brucker a eu l'honneur de lui élever son premier monument" (*ibid.*).

series of propositions, juxtaposed and numbered, is only too reminiscent of Wolff's geometric method and formalism. His clarity can only come from the logical linking of ideas, and this apparent regularity hides a real confusion". Yet he cannot be defined as a simple compiler: "This epithet is unjust, especially in the mouth of those who compile their own books without citing him and whose criticism is often no more profound nor any truer than this" (DSPh, pp. 388–389).

An opinion that was contemporary with Cousin's, but from an opposite viewpoint, was that of Hegel, who influenced the later interpretations of the *Historia critica* in various ways. Even though Hegel remarked on the derivation of Brucker's method from the rationalism of Wolff, he put forward the accusation of anti-historicism: "[It] is an immense compilation which is not formed straight from the original sources, but is mixed with reflexions after the manner of the times [. . .]. Brucker's manner of procedure is entirely unhistoric, and yet nowhere ought we to proceed in a more historic manner than in the history of philosophy. This work is thus simply so much useless ballast" (Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Vol. I (London, 1892–1896), p. 112). Hegel was not interested by now in emphasizing Brucker's lack of philosophical awareness, but, by showing the bias of his opinions and the inadequacy of his method, he wished to reduce the importance of the *Historia critica* and its practical usefulness, while freely helping himself, as has been shown, to the "useless ballast" in the course of his own historical studies.

During the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentiethth, the *Historia critica* continued to be read and consulted; but it was no longer an obligatory point of reference for those interested in the history of philosophy as it had been in the early decades of the century.[59] It was barely mentioned by B. Croce (*Teoria e storia della storiografia* (Bari, 1917), pp. 232–233; Brucker is recorded as Buonafede's source), and was not highly considered by Windelband, who likened it, because of its character as a collection of biographical information and anecdotes, to ancient doxography: "Those expositions belonging to the modern period which were based upon the remains of ancient tradition had this same character of collections of curiosities. Such were Stanley's reproduction of Diogenes Laertius and Brucker's works" (W. Windelband, *A History of Philosophy*, transl. J.H. Tufts (New York, 1901; repr. New York, 1958), p. 10; for Windelband, "it was, however, through Hegel that the history of philosophy was first made an independent science").

Hegel's interpretation was developed in one way at the beginning of the twentieth century by Johannes Freyer, author of one of the first histories of eighteenth-century philosophical historiography: *Geschichte der Geschichte der Philosophie im achtzehnten Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1912), pp. 21–49. Brucker's work was included under the term "Pragmatismus", which Freyer referred back to the requirement

[59] See the opinion expressed by Schopenhauer in opposition to the historians of his time: "Moreover, it may be reckoned that such a money-making writer of the history of philosophy can have read scarcely a tithe of the writings about which he furnishes a report. Their real study demands all of a long and studious life, such as the stout-hearted Brucker formerly devoted to them in the industrious times of old" (A. Schopenhauer, "Fragments for the History of Philosophy", in *Parerga and Paralipomena* [1851], transl. E.F.J. Payne (Oxford, 2000), I, p.31).

expressed by Buddeus's eclectic school that the history of philosophy, as well as presenting examples of good living, should teach how to philosophize, showing "how pure and absolute philosophy, which he [the historian] without doubt had in his possession, appears in the historical systems of philosophy; how much of it [philosophy] they [systems] bring about; what causes and circumstances in the lives of the philosophers are to be blamed for their errors and have hindered the realization of absolute philosophy" (Freyer, pp. 28–29). Brucker's method is substantially anti-historical, because it tends to judge all philosophies according to the idea of a natural and "normal" system (*ein normales System*), which coincides with the idea of reason typical of the Enlightenment. Thus each historical philosophy loses its specific individuality and is reduced to a long series of "philosophemes" arranged according to the model of Descartes' mechanics. After criticizing the inadequacy of the method, Freyer adds the abstractness and insufficiency of the concept of philosophy, understood as a "recipient (*ein Behältnis*) of independent thoughts on philosophical matters", leading to the conclusion that Brucker was not fit to write a true history of philosophy.

But, in Freyer's view, it is possible to recover from Brucker's work a constructive attitude for the development of the genre. With all its limitation, it stands at the beginning of a process that was to be fully recognized in the age of Kant and Hegel for having attained the important realization that the past of philosophy has a contemporary significance for the philosopher. The eclectic referent, which leads to this realization, forms, however, Brucker's main limitation, because it leads to an extrinsic reconstruction of the different philosophies, unable to grasp their profound individuality: "The history of philosophy, considered in its unity, is the synthesis of all the sectarian philosophies in relation to universal modern philosophy; it describes the long suffering (*der Leidensgang*) of reason through the distress of sectarianism until it reached the summit of eclecticism. However primitive its plan may be, the history of philosophy follows through this a distinctly philosophical function, that of being a repository of the truth, selecting from which, reason constructs its eclectic system. The idea that the philosophizing of the past cannot be completely lost to our thought had been defeated; instead, it should be taken up again or, as Hegel was to say, "annulled" in it. Brucker's limitation consisted not so much of the fact that he understood his own philosophy as the objective of history – Kant and Hegel did the same – as his understanding in a substantial and extrinsic way of the continuity of systems as a uniform and harmonious exchange, and the preservation of the past in present-day thought as an eclectic assumption; but above all in his casting of this system of pure formal elements, like a large-meshed net, over the historical mass that within itself remains amorphous, and in not going deeply into all the material. The development will proceed in the sense in which not only the fineness and depth of the structural moments, but also their power to make connections and their synthesizing vigour, will increase constantly" (Freyer, pp. 48–49).

With the revision of the traditional accusation of anti-historicism made against the eighteenth century, encouraged at the beginning of the twentieth century by Dilthey (*Das achtzehnte Jahrhundert und die geschichtliche Welt*, 1901), the

conditions were laid down for a different consideration of the origin of philosophical historiography in the modern era. In fact, Cassirer, who was for so long preoccupied with describing the Enlightenment sense of history, only once mentioned Brucker, in passing, noting the dependence of the articles on philosophy of the *Encyclopédie* on the *Historia critica*, as well as on Bayle and Deslandes (E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Enlightenment*, transl. by F.C.A. Koellen and J.P. Pettegrove (Princeton, 1951), p. 225).

However, the question of the origin of modern history of philosophy is tackled specifically by Antonio Banfi in the article "Concetto e sviluppo della storiografia filosofica" (1933). Unlike Cousin, who saw the origin of philosophical historiography as closely linked with modern thought, and was near to Brucker and Descartes in this, Banfi placed at the beginning of this process the reaction of speculative scepticism against the excessive faith in reason that had characterized philosophy since the Renaissance. On the level of historical criticism, Bayle's scepticism found an ally in religious orthodoxy, which, in opposition to the boldness of modern philosophy, underlined "the element of accidentality and singularity in the history of philosophical systems". Brucker's historiography belongs to this direction; in fact, "from the sceptico-dogmatic point of view" it is the maturest and most successful: "Basing himself on a theological dogmatism in which Leibnizian rationalism and Protestant orthodoxism are amalgamated, he in fact conceives the history of philosophy as *infinita falsae philosophiae exempla*" (Banfi, "Concetto e sviluppo", p. 111).

The Protestant theological element is also pointed out by Émile Bréhier, who notes the persistence of a Patristic Augustinian historiographical schema in the first histories of philosophy to appear in the modern age: "Even in the great work of Brucker [. . .] we find a traditional scheme of philosophical development which comes from St. Augustine's *City of God* and which persisted through the centuries. Philosophy starts with the beginning of the world; the Greeks lied in saying that they were the first philosophers. In reality, they borrowed their doctrines from Moses, from Egypt, and from Babylonia. The first period of philosophy was not, therefore, the Greek period, but the Barbarian". But into this negative vision of "profane" philosophy Brucker inserts the modern theme of eclecticism, "the idea that the unity of the human mind remains visible through the diversity of the sects [. . .]. The history of the sects, then, is only a means of freeing us from sects" (Bréhier, *The History of Philosophy. The Hellenic Age*, "Introduction", pp. 13–16).

In recent decades references to Brucker's work have become more frequent and more closely based on a complete reading of the *Historia critica* and not only on the "Dissertatio praeliminaris". On the one hand, it is studied for its contents, as a source from which the Illuminists, and Diderot in particular, drew their particular vision of the history of philosophy, or, more generally, it is studied in works concerned with the history of the interpretation of figures or periods. On the other hand, it remains at the centre of interest of those histories of philosophical historiography which deal with the origin and development of the discipline in the modern era. Marino Gentile makes his assessment in a "theoretical" context. The history of philosophy has a double origin: it can derive from a predominantly theoretical interest,

such as that which prompted Aristotle to present his history of the philosophical teachings which preceded his own; or from an erudite doxographic interest, such as that of Diogenes Laertius. These two forms of historiography are dependent on each other, and it is the former, "theoretical" aspect, which conditions the other, providing it with a interpretative framework. Brucker's historiography is of the doxographic type, which can thus be referred back to the Laertian model. It is quite true that Brucker would have been aware of the danger of confusing his history of philosophy "with the generic history of culture", but because of his inability to give an adequate definition of philosophy he ended up by including in his history "those forms of wisdom [. . .] which, though they do not bear the name of philosophy, belonged intrinsically to philosophy itself" (M. Gentile, *Se e come è possibile la storia della filosofia*, pp. 17–19).

In reality, as we have seen, the *Historia critica* is not a work of pure erudition. In accordance with the ideals of his time, Brucker assigned a very precise function to historical study, that of freeing us from the errors of the past, and evaluating and confirming its own achievements. The problem of "method" essentially dates back to the Enlightenment, as Giovanni Santinello has shown on the basis of an analysis of the themes of the "Dissertatio". Brucker's objective was, in fact, to give the history of philosophy the aspect of a "positive science" by adopting the appropriate cautionary reservations and rules of method that would guarantee the objectivity and impartiality of the historian in the face of the sources under examination: "For us today, Brucker's great history of philosophy has become the document of an age: although it came before the establishment of historicism it nevertheless set itself the task of describing the history of the human intellect, well aware of the dangers that such an enterprise exposed it to, and for that reason raising the barrier of a positive methodology against these very dangers" (Santinello, "Il problema metodologico", p. 314).

An important step nearer the sources of Brucker's historiography and its historical significance has been made by the rejection of the classical Hegelian framework, which had up to then been considered as the origin of modern philosophical historiography. Contrary to Banfi's hypothesis, which sought the origins of the history of philosophy "as we understand it as an autonomous discipline", in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Eugenio Garin has identified the origin in the thinking of the Renaissance, with the declaration of the plurality of philosophical concepts, in polemic with Scholasticism. The transformation of the concept of "critical" from a philological to a philosophical meaning forms the basis for the creation of a new dimension to the discipline, which in the eighteenth century becomes the *historia critica* or the *histoire critique* of philosophy. Garin has studied the evolution of the genre of the history of philosophy in France, from Deslandes (with his "organic concept of the progress of the human spirit") to Condillac, where the history of philosophy seems to disappear into a "philosophy of history" as it does in Condorcet. A similar evolution takes place in Germany, where the "Brucker's monumental work of erudition" leads on one hand to the methodological discussions of the Kantians or the great histories by Tiedemann, Tennemann, and Buhle, and on the other to Hegel's *Vorlesungen* (Garin, "La storia 'critica' della filosofia", pp. 274).

The *Historia critica* had a particularly important place in Braun's *Histoire de l'histoire de la philosophie*, marking a crucial stage in the development of the genre, in the journey between the Renaissance and the age of Kant, representing the moment in which it acquired the aspect of an autonomous discipline with a specific objective and a well-defined methodology: "In this way, even if it does not seem so at first sight, Brucker was opposed to a whole historiographical tradition which had nothing of the strictly philosophical and which viewed philosophy as one literary genre among others. Making the history of philosophy into a philosophical history, that is, re-thinking it from the basis of its principles and examining the figures of the past as the products of one and the same reason, immediately transforms the field of repetition into a reserve destined to supply a construction that will constitute the very essence of the new discipline" (Braun, p. 120). The theoretical premises of this plan belong to the Enlightenment: "a belief in the identity of reason and human nature through time and space" and "the idea of a natural order of philosophy, analogous to the natural order of the economy and of law". The limitations of Brucker's historiography are those of the Enlightenment, unable to understand historical evolution in an organic way. Repeating Freyer's interpretation, Braun notes the merely "extrinsic" presence philosophy in Brucker's history of philosophy, something which proves to be even clearer when it is compared with the historiography of the age of Kant: philosophy's past is still regarded as something "other" in relation to philosophy, the set of the moments from which reason has freed itself and to which it returns only to find comfort and support for its own superiority: "What I should feel myself linked to is not the adventure of a reason involved in a still-open destiny, but, so to speak, the account of the outdated practice of a reason that does not entirely belong" (Braun, p. 134).[60]

The enlightenment characteristics of Brucker's history are developed further by Maria Assunta Del Torre, who singles out not so much the theoretical as the ideological presuppositions of the *Historia critica* in the "bourgeois" culture of the eighteenth century. On the historiographical level, Brucker was the spokesman of the ideals and aspirations of the "third Estate", which, with its emphasis on the practical aspect of philosophizing and the philosopher's moral responsibility, pressed for its own inclusion on a social and political level: "A clearly oriented history of philosophy which, by taking on the mass of demands and partial acquisitions of earlier practical and theoretical historiography, transforms and renews it in a unitary sense. It is difficult to criticise or to speak of Brucker's surrender to the 'fashion' of universal history, or of his renunciation of the historian's objectivity: in reality, in his breadth and in his internal divisions and choices, he expresses the perspective in which the century looked at itself and tradition" (Del Torre, pp. 92–93).

[60]To Braun, Kantian philosophical historiography is different: "C'est désormais la raison elle-même qui assume la responsabilité des formes historiques, mais d'une manière nouvelle, en tant qu'elle s'y reconnait comme l'activité informante et constituante. Le passé n'apparait plus comme ce qui diffère d'un ordre donné, valable en soi et par rapport auquel il ne peut se déterminer que comme erreur: mais comme le résultat d'un exercice, dont on a surpris le fonctionnement" (Braun, p. 257).

Brucker's place within the Enlightenment is stressed, in a more or less marked manner, by all historians who have taken an interest in his *Historia critica*; and it can also be justified by the later fortune of the work and by its use by the most prominent representatives of the French Enlightenment who were associated with the *Encyclopédie.* Indirect proof is provided by the criticisms of the *Mémoires de Trévoux* and by the revision of the *Historia critica*'s too openly rationalistic and anti-Scholastic themes by rigidly orthodox Catholics, such as Buonafede and Cenáculo. But Brucker's work did not have the materialistic and areligious tones of the French Enlightenment or the theological radicality of a certain kind of German *Aufklärung*: it was characterized by a search for reconciliation between reason and faith in order to guarantee the possibility and progress of philosophy and science, while safeguarding the viewpoint of Lutheran theology. His own eclecticism was rooted in the Lutheran concept of man "fallen" through original sin, from which derives the consciousness of one's own limitations and the need to integrate personal experience and the search for truth with the path already trodden by others.

In effect, Brucker's historiography is wholly permeated with theological concerns, following the tradition of the school of Buddeus. The most fully-developed parts of the *Historia critica* are those which contain reflection on theological discourse: the presumed origins of philosophy among the Eastern peoples, in comparison with the idea of the divine origin of wisdom; the Platonic and neoplatonic systems with their close connection with the Christianity of the early centuries; Patristics and Scholasticism studied in relation to the history of the Church; or modern philosophy conceived in parallel and in harmony with religious reform. The point of view of atheism is constantly present and forms the main element of discrimination in the judgement of the systems. The observation by J. Proust that "Brucker's Christianity is liberal and close to deism" exaggerates the consistency of Brucker's rationalism, which, by starting from a rigorous distinction between the philosophical and theological fields, certainly did not intend to reduce the value of revelation, but rather emphasized man's need of religious experience. And yet it is also true that Brucker had moved far from the spirit of a primitive pietism which, as with Zierold, found in philosophical historiography the proof of the "errors" that reason encounters when it proudly asserts its power and self-sufficiency. The teaching that Brucker believed one could draw from the history of philosophy was a greater certainty of faith, made more solid by contrast with the false paths of human wisdom. However, this does not deny value to the progress of reason, which, correctly used within its limits, reaches ever higher goals in the philosophical and scientific field, for the good of society and the happiness of individuals.

Another important question for the interpretation of Brucker's historiography is that of his sources. During the twentieth century the idea of Brucker's dependence on Christian Wolff, which was recognized by Cousin and Hegel, has been replaced by that of his derivation from Buddeus's eclecticism, supported particularly by Karl Alt, author of a full intellectual biography of Brucker. This derivation is confirmed by Wundt (*Brucker war ein Schüler Buddeus*) in his demonstration that the development of historical science in the third period of the German Enlightenment (1750–1780) took place under the guidance and as a continuation more of the first

period (Buddeus, Ch. Thomasius) than of the second (Wolff) (Wundt, p. 284). In effect the motivations that lie at the foundation of the *Historia critica* go back to Brucker's encounter with Buddeus at the university of Jena. And if the author's own explicit acknowledgement of this were not enough (cf. Brucker, V, p. 529), it is confirmed by many of the elements that we have seen as characteristic of Brucker's historical work. The very project of a "philosophical history" of philosophy can be traced back to eclecticism because of the theoretical importance that it comes to assume. The didactic format of the discipline goes back to Buddeus, with its educational purpose, as does its usefulness in the defence of religious orthodoxy, in the search for the happy medium between superstition and atheism, and in the battle against Spinozism. [61]

Thus the theoretical premises of Brucker's historiography are to be found in the school of Buddeus. But when one reads the *Historia critica*, it is not difficult to discern the influence of Wolffian philosophy, first and foremost in the interpretation of modern thought, whose summit is reached by Leibniz' system, while in his juvenile work, the *Historia doctrinae de ideis*, the author had made a clear choice for empiricism. His very definition of philosophy, which supports the framework of the work, shows the influence of Wolff: philosophy is the knowledge of the principles and laws of divine and human truth and is distinguished from common knowledge precisely by its formal aspect. The search for a system in the various historical philosophies, which was indeed recommended by Buddeus, acquires a more rigorous application in the Wolffian vision of philosophy, with the clarification, on a formal level too, of the link that sustains all the affirmations of a thinker according to the procedure of geometric demonstration.

---

[61] The source of Buddeus' philosophical historiography was not the eclecticism of Leibniz but that of Thomasius and Buddeus, which, directly inspired by the anti-Scholastic and anti-Aristotelian polemic, was on principle against every kind of reconciliation or syncretism both of ancient with modern philosophy and of Graeco-pagan thought with Christianity. Note what is stated by Enrico Berti, on the other hand, who detects the premises of Brucker's history of philosophy, through the mediation of Leibniz, in Renaissance Platonism, and more precisely in Steucus. Steucus, "by means of the concept of perennial philosophy, managed to give the history of philosophy a continuity and a unity of development of a kind that it had never known" (E. Berti, "Il concetto rinascimentale di *philosophia perennis* e le origini della storiografia filosofica tedesca", *Verifiche*, VI (1977), pp. 6–7). Apart from the criticisms made of Steucus in the *Historia critica* ("he did not pay enough attention to the authenticity of the written records or to the true meaning of teachings and dogmas, but he used corrupt and debased works as if they were trustworthy testimonies; in this way he corrupted the sense of the teachings of the sects and sometimes also of sacred teachings, and in declaring his full approval of Plato he betrayed the [Christian] religion": Brucker, IV, p. 754), it is notable that Brucker identified in the "concordant" attitude of the young Leibniz the major obstacle to the realization of the project of "a history not of philosophers but of philosophy" which he found in Jakob Thomasius: "Following his guidance, while very young he compared the ancients and the moderns, examined their teachings, revealed the underlying reasons, and distinguished himself to such a point that if he had not, I do not know by what unfortunate chance, become dominated by his study of syncretism among the ancients and the moderns, philosophical history could have hoped for great developments from him while he was still young" (Brucker, V, p. 374).

However, Brucker always remained faithful to the canon of objectivity and autonomy of historical judgement, defended, in the sphere of the eclectic school, by Heumann; and he declared himself to be dissatisfied with a historiography written in terms that were too openly Wolffian, as suggested in those very years by Johann Ernst Schubert.[62] If it is true that the *Historia critica* can, in many respects, be placed in the context of Wolffian philosophical culture, yet in its basic lines and in its inspiration it originates outside and is independent of that culture. Wolffism certainly conditioned and gave direction to Brucker's history of philosophy, but without Buddeus's eclecticism it would not even have been possible.

As a disciple and successor of Buddeus and Heumann, Brucker cannot be considered as the founder of modern philosophical historiography, as Cousin would have it, and not even of the German type; but he is seen as the heir and the most authoritative representative of the vast movement of historico-philosophical studies, which developed from the Renaissance and up to the Enlightenment under the banner of two tendencies, one philological and erudite and one speculative and philosophical, which now start to become clearly thematized and unified. If on the one hand the perspective of eclectic philosophy made possible it possible to carry out this synthesis of historical and philosophical work, it also brought Brucker nearer to the problems of modern philosophy, interpreted and assessed according to the typically Enlightenment idea of the autonomy of reason and freedom from prejudice. The success of the *Historia critica* and its circulation in nearly all of the European countries, can be explained essentially by its capacity to adapt itself and to respond to the needs and tendencies of the historical and philosophical culture of its time.

8.1.10. On Brucker's life and works: Jöcher (Erg) I, cols. 2309–2311; Heinsius, I, col. 441; BUAM, VI, pp. 81–82; Gumposch, pp. 223–224; ADB, III, p. 397; XLVII, p. 275; NDB, II, p. 647; K. Alt, *Jakob Brucker, ein Schulmeister des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Kaufbeuren, 1926), published also under the title: *Die Lateinschule der freien Reichsstadt Kaufbeuren und ihr berühmtester Rektor Magister Jakob Brucker. Ein Beitrag zur schwäbischen Schul- und Gelehrtengeschichte* (Kaufbeuren, 1926): it is essential for information on the sources and for the detailed list of Brucker's writings; F. Herre, "Jakob Brucker", in *Lebensbilder aus dem Bayerischen Schwaben*, ed. G.F. von Pölnitz (Munich, 1958), Vol. VI, pp. 372–387; U. Behler, "Eine unbeachtete Biographie Jacob Bruckers", in *Jakob Brucker (1696–1770), Philosoph und Historiker der europäischen Aufklärung*, eds. W. Schmidt-Biggemann and Th. Stammen (Berlin, 1998), pp. 19–73; Th. Stammen,

[62] Cf. J.E. Schubert, *Historia philosophiae. Pars prima* (Jena, 1742). Here the author makes use of the geometric method, proceeding by definitions, scholia and corollaries, but according to Brucker he did not take enough account of historical and philological criticism: "Given that he does not set out a critical history of the opinions of the ancients, but puts forward an apology of ancient physiology and ancient theology, it is not surprising that the ancient teachings should have appeared to him in a form different from the way we have described them in our critical history, free from all prejudice of hypotheses and based exclusively on the testimony of the ancients and supported by an accurate logical examination" (Brucker, VI, p. 31).

" 'Spuren' einer Biographie", *ibi*, pp. 74–82; H. Zäh, "Die Bedeutung Jacob Bruckers für die Erforschung der Augsburger Gelehrtengeschichte", *ibi*, pp. 83–98; Id., "Verzeichnis der Schriften Jacob Bruckers", *ibi*, pp. 259–351; E. François, "Bruckers Stellung in der Augsburger Konfessiongeschichte", *ibi*, pp. 99–109.

Reviews of Brucker's works in journals of the period: on the *Historia philosophica doctrinae de ideis*: AE, 1723, pp. 392–396; BG, V (1723); VIII (1724), pp. 218–244; IX (1725), pp. 69–102. On the *Otium Vindelicum*: BG, XX (1730), pp. 172–188; AE, 1729, pp. 283–284. On the *Kurtze Fragen*: AE, 1731, pp. 558–560; AE, Suppl. X, pp. 81–83 and 169–173; NAE, Suppl. I, pp. 124–129 and 319–324; Suppl. II, pp. 427–429; NAE, 1738, pp. 238–239; BG, XXIV (1732), pp. 42–76; XXVII (1733), pp. 118–132; XXX (1734), pp. 107–123; XXXII (1735), pp. 51–72; XXXV (1736), pp. 145–166; XXXVII (1737), pp. 164–178. On the *Historia critica philosophiae*: NAE, 1742, pp. 635–642; 1744, pp. 210–215 and 460–467; 1745, pp. 207–213; GLF, IV (1745), Part III, pp. 66–90; Part IV, pp. 67–91; GLF, V (1746), Part I, pp. 146–161; Part III, pp. 92–108; V (1746), Part IV, pp. 58–73; VI (1750), Part I, pp. 47–78; VI, Part IV (1753), pp. 73–89; MT, 1754, II, pp. 455–477, 603–626, 1777–1801; JS, 1743, pp. 551–552; 1745, pp. 408–409. On *Miscellanea historiae*: NAE, 1750, pp. 669–672.

Sources on the later history of Brucker's works: G.B. Vico, *The New Science.* Transl. from the third edn (1744) by Th.G. Bergin and M.H. Fisch (Ithaca, N.Y., 1948), § 347, p. 92; Id., *L'autobiografia. Il carteggio e le poesie varie*, eds. B. Croce and F. Nicolini (Bari, 1929^2), p. 256; P.M. Doria, *Difesa della metafisica degli antichi filosofi contro il signor Locke ed alcuni altri moderni autori* (Venice, 1732); M. do Cenáculo, *Conclusiones philosophicae critico-rationales de historia logicae, eius proemialibus, ente rationis et universalibus in communi* (Coimbra, 1751; repr. in Gama Caeiro, *Frei Manuel do Cenáculo*, pp. 185–219); Id., *Synopsis historiae philosophiae secundum ordinem Bruckerianum* (Lisboa, 1773); H.-S. Formey, *Histoire abrégée de la philosophie* (Amsterdam, 1760; English transl., London, 1766); *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (Lucca, 1758^2), Vol. I, "Aristotélisme", p. 571; J.-A. Naigeon, *Philosophie ancienne et moderne* (Paris, 1791), Vol. I, "Discours préliminaire", pp. i–xxvi; Schmersahl, pp. 13–15; J.C. Hennings, "Anhang aus Jakob Bruckers *Historia critica philosophiae* nebst einigen Zusätzen", in J.G. Walch, *Philosophisches Lexicon [. . .] mit einer kurtzen kritischen Geschichte der Philosophie aus dem Bruckerischen grossen Werke versehen* (Leipzig, 1775^4, facs. repr. Hildesheim, 1968), Vol. II, cols. 1745–1804; J.G.H Feder, *Grundriss der philosophischen Wissenschaften* (Koburg, 1769), p. 343; C. Meiners, *Grundriss der Geschichte der Weltweisheit* (Lemgo, 1786), p. 4; I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. N. Kemp Smith (Basingstoke and London, 1929), A316–317/B372–374; J.G. Buhle, *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie und einer kritischen Literatur derselben* (Göttingen, 1796), Vol. I, pp. 8–9; Ortloff, *Handbuch der Literatur*, pp. 26–27; D. Tiedemann, *Geist der speculativen Philosophie* (Marburg, 1797), Vol. VI, p. iv; W.G. Tennemann, *Geschichte der Philosophie* (Leipzig, 1798), Vol. I, p. lxxvi; Tennemann, I, p. 15; A. Buonafede (Agatopisto Cromaziano), *Della istoria e della indole di ogni filosofia*, 7 Vols. (Lucca, 1766–1781); Id., *Della restaurazione di ogni filosofia ne' secoli*, *XVI, XVII*

e XVIII, 3 Vols. (Venice, 1785–1789); W. Enfield, *History of Philosophy [...] drawn up from Brucker's* Historia critica philosophiae, 2 Vols. (London, 1791; other editions: Dublin, 1792; London, 1819; London, 1837); J.M. Degérando, *Histoire comparée des sistèmes de philosophie, relativement aux principes des connoissances humaines* (Paris, 1804), Vol. I, pp. 59–60.

Literature on Brucker's later reputation: B. Croce, *Teoria e storia della storiografia* (Bari, 1917), pp. 232–233; G. Mollowitz, "Kants Platoauffassung", *Kantstudien*, XL (1935), pp. 13–67; Feldmann, "Die Geschichte der Philosophie in Kants Vorlesungen", p. 177; E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Enlightenment*, transl. F.C.A. Koellen and J.P. Petergrove (Princeton, 1951), p. 225; Vernière, *Spinoza et la pensée française*, pp. 587–588; J. Pereira Gomes, *Os começos da Historiografia filosófica em Portugal* (Lisboa, 1956); A.M. Wilson, *Diderot. The Testing Years* (New York, 1957), pp. 216–221; P. Casini, *Diderot "philosophe"* (Bari, 1962), pp. 254–264; J. Proust, *Diderot et l'Encyclopédie* (Paris, 1967), pp. 255–293 ("Diderot traducteur de Brucker. Du déisme au matérialisme"); F. Adorno, "Brucker e Hegel storici del pensiero antico. Note preliminari", in *Atti e Memorie dell'Accademia toscana di scienze e lettere la Colombaria*, Vol. XXXI, n.s., XVII (1966), pp. 251–284; Geldsetzer, *Die Philosophie der Philosophiegeschichte, passim*; E. Garin, "Antonio Genovesi storico della scienza", in Id., *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo* (Pisa, 1970 [new edn, Florence, 1993]), pp. 223–240; Zambelli, *La formaziona filosofica di Antonio Genovesi*, *passim*; G. Frigo, "L'ateo di sistema. Il 'caso Spinoza' nella storiografia filosofica tedesca dall'*Aufklärung* alla *Romantik*", *Verifiche*, VI (1977), pp. 811–849; L. Malusa, *La storiografia filosofica italiana nella seconda metà dell'Ottocento* (Milan, 1977), *passim*; G. Paganini, "Tra Epicuro e Stratone: Bayle e l'immagine di Epicuro dal Sei al Settecento", *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia*, XXXIII (1978), pp. 72–115; Micheli, *Kant storico della filosofia*, pp. 132–134, 180–182; Schröder, *Spinoza in der deutschen Frühaufklärung*, *passim*; F. da Gama Caeiro, *La historia de la filosofía portuguesa como realidad histórica y como disciplina: los problemas de su constitución* (Salamanca, 1990); R. Jehl, "Jacob Brucker und die *Encyclopédie*", in *Jakob Brucker (1696–1770)*, eds. W. Schmidt-Biggemann and Th. Stammen, pp. 238–256; G. Piaia, "Jacob Bruckers Wirkungsgeschichte in Frankreich und Italien", *ibi*, pp. 218–237; Id., "L'accademico 'agiato' Johann Jacob Brucker e il mondo intellettuale italiano", in *L'Accademia degli Agiati nel Settecento europeo. Irradiazioni culturali*, eds. G. Cantarutti and S. Ferrari (Milan, 2007), pp. 183–197; I. Tolomio, "Die Indizierung der *Historia critica philosophiae* Jacob Bruckers durch den Barnabiten Alfonso Bruzzi", *Bruckeriana*, Heft 3 (2001), pp. 43–49.

On the criticism: G.W. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, transl. E.S. Haldane and F. H. Simson (London, 1892–1896), Vol. I, pp. 43 and 112; V. Cousin, *Cours de philosophie. Introduction à l'histoire de la philosophie* (Brussels, 1836), pp. 344–382 (English transl. O.W. Wight (New York, 1852), Vol. I, pp. 229–249); Ch. Bénard, "Brucker", in DSPh, Vol. I, pp. 385–389; F. Ueberweg, *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie* (Basel, 1953), Vol. III, p. 459; F. Picavet, *L'histoire de la philosophie. Ce qui elle a été, ce qu'elle peut être* (Paris, 1888), p. 4; W. Windelband, *A History of Philosophy*, transl. J.H. Tufts (New York, 1901; repr.

New York, 1958), Vol. I, p. 10; Freyer, pp. 21–29; A. Banfi, "Concetto e sviluppo della storiografia filosofica", in Id., *La ricerca della realtà* (Florence, 1959 [eds. G.D. Neri and G. Scaramuzza, Bologna, 1996]), Vol. I, pp. 101–167; É. Bréhier, *The History of Philosophy. The Hellenic Age*, transl. J. Thomas (Chicago and London, 1963), pp. 1–33; Wundt, p. 284; Krauss, *Studien zur deutschen und französischen Aufklärung*, pp. 167–168 and 375; M. Gentile, *Se e come è possible la storia della filosofia* (Padua, 1964), pp. 17 and 19; G. Santinello, "Il problema metodologico nella storia critica della filosofia di Jakob Brucker", as in appendix to Id., *Metafisica e critica in Kant* (Bologna, 1965), pp. 293–315; Ehrhardt, *Philosophiegeschichte*, p. 43; Proust, *Diderot et l'Encyclopédie*, pp. 233–254 ("L'histoire de la philosophie de Pierre Bayle à Jakob Brucker"); E. Garin, "La storia 'critica' della filosofia nel Settecento", in Id., *Dal Rinascimento all'Illuminismo*, pp. 241–284; Id., "Il compendio della *Historia critica* del Brucker", *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia*, XXVIII (1973), pp. 201–202; Braun, pp. 119–137; Del Torre, pp. 69–102; E. Berti, "Il concetto rinascimentale di *Philosophia perennis* e le origini della storiografia filosofica tedesca", *Verifiche*, VI (1977), pp. 3–11; S. Ricci, "Brucker e Deslandes. Nuovi documenti", GCFI, LX (1981), pp. 221–237; M. Dal Pra – E. Garin – L. Braun – G. Santinello, *La storiografia filosofica e la sua storia* (Padua, 1982); G. Saccaro Battisti, "Metafisica e cabbala di Abraham Cohen Herrera nella *Historia critica philosophiae* di Jacob Brucker", in *Atti del II Convegno dell'Associazione italiana per lo studio del Giudaismo*, eds. F. Parente and D. Piattelli (Rome, 1983), pp. 131–141; Longo, *Historia philosophiae philosophica*, pp. 91–132; Gueroult, pp. 338–347; Wimmer, *Interkulturelle Philosophie*, pp. 223–236 and 255–266; A. Neschke, "Le degré zéro de la philosophie platonicienne. Platon dans l'*Historia critica philosophiae* de J.J. Brucker (1742)", *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, XCVII (1992), pp. 377–400; C.W.T. Blackwell, "Diogenes Laertius's *Life of Pyrrho* and the Interpretation of Ancient Scepticism in the History of Philosophy: Stanley through Brucker to Tennemann", in *Scepticism and Irreligion in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, eds. R.H. Popkin and A. Vanderjagt (Leiden – New York – Köln, 1993), pp. 324–357; Ead., "The Case of Honoré Fabri and the Historiography of Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century. Jesuit Aristotelianism in Protestant History of Philosophy: Sturm, Morhof and Brucker", *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, 1995, pp. 49–77; Ead., "Epicurus and Boyle, Le Clerc and Locke. 'Ideas' and their Redefinition in Jacob Brucker's *Historia philosophica de ideis*, 1723", in *Il vocabolario della* République des Lettres, ed. M. Fattori, pp. 77–92; Ead., "Sturm, Morhof and Brucker vs. Aristotle. Three Eclectic Natural Philosophers wiew the Aristotelian Method", in *Method and Order in Renaissance Philosophy of Nature. The Aristotle Commentary Tradition*, eds. D.A. Di Liscia, E. Kessler and Ch. Methuen (Aldershot, 1997), pp. 381–407; Ead., "Skepticism as a Sect, Skepticism as a Philosophical Stance: J.J. Brucker versus Carl Fiedrich Stäudlin", in *The Skeptical Tradition around 1800. Skepticism in Philosophy, Science and Society*, eds. J. Van der Zande and R. Popkin (Dordrecht, 1998), pp. 343–363; Ead., "Zur Traditionskonstruktion der Naturphilosophie bei Joh. Jacob Brucker", *Dialektik*, 1998/1, pp. 73–86; D.M. Fazio, *Giulio Cesare Vanini nella cultura filosofica tedesca del Sette e Ottocento. Da Brucker a*

Schopenhauer (Galatina, 1995); Bonacina, *Filosofia ellenistica e cultura moderna*, pp. 61–68; W. Schmidt-Biggemann, "Jacob Bruckers philosophiegeschichtliches Konzept", in *Jakob Brucker (1696–1770)*, eds. W. Schmidt-Biggemann and Th. Stammen, pp. 113–134; M. Longo, "Geistige Anregungen und Quellen der Bruckerschen Historiographie", *ibi*, pp. 159–186; K. Flasch, "Jacob Brucker und die Philosophie des Mittelalters", *ibi*, pp. 187–197; C.W.T. Blackwell, "Jakob Brucker's theory of knowledge and the history of natural philosophy", *ibi*, pp. 198–217; M. Franz, "*Ipse alimenta sibi*. Jacob Bruckers Begründung der modernen Philosophiegeschichtsschreibung", *Philosophische Rundschau*, XLVIII (2001), pp. 153–161; G. Piaia, "Brucker versus Rorty? On the "Models" of the Historiography of Philosophy", *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, IX (2001), 1, pp. 69–81; G. Varani, "Die Rezeption von G.W. Leibniz (1646–1716) in der Geschichtsschreibung Jacob Bruckers. Bemerkungen zum aufklärerischen Moment Leibniz' Wirkungsgeschichte", *Bruckeriana*, Heft 6 (2002), pp. 59–84; Ead., *Pensiero "alato" e modernità*, pp. 279–327; L. Catana, *The Historiographical Concept "System of Philosophy". Its Origin, Nature, Influence and Legitimacy* (Leiden, 2008); Id., "Lovejoy's Readings of Bruno: Or How Nineteenth-Century History of Philosophy was "Transformed" into the History of Ideas", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, LXXI (2010), 1, pp. 91–112 (97–99, 105–106, 108).

Name Index

Note: The names of authors of general histories of philosophy, or comparable works, are in *italics*. The page numbers in *italics* refer to the pages on which those authors are specifically examined. The first name, or names, of authors of secondary literature are abbreviated to the initial letter, or letters.

A
Abaris, 118
Abel, 325, 333, 376, 515
Abelard, *see* Peter Abelard
Aben Esra, *see* Ibn Esra, Abraham
Abraham (Patriarch), 56, 64–65, 90, 128, 254, 281, 290, 327, 413, 415
Abrotelia (daughter of Abroteles of Tarentum), 75
Abu Muslim, 121
Aconcio, Jacopo, 113, 115
Adam, 5, 22, 56, 61–65, 90, 128, 170, 215, 217, 219, 225, 252, 272–273, 281, 285, 318–319, 333, 336, 353, 356, 376, 385, 443, 464, 512, 514–515, 517–520
Adam, A., 12, 99
Adam, Ch., 3
Adam (Adamus), Melchior, 98
Adelmann, H.B., 240
Adelung, Johann Christoph, xx, 437
Ado, 141
Adorno, F., 575
Aelianus, Claudius, 112
Aeschines, 43
Aesop, 295, 472
Agathias Scholasticus, 145
Agricola (Bauer), Georg, 283
Agricola, Rudolph (Roelof Huysman), 54, 113, 172, 283, 434
Agrimi, M., 228, 267
Agrippa von Nettesheim, Heinrich Cornelius, 7, 113, 147, 168, 272, 518
Ahnert, Th., 322–323, 458
Ajello, R., 226
Alberti, A.M., 147, 240
Albertus Magnus (Albert the Great), St., 19, 34, 54, 80, 113, 152–153, 155, 193, 201, 237, 242, 244, 252, 261, 272, 274, 283, 359, 379, 383, 455, 467, 473, 517, 530
Albinus of Smyrna, 363, 460, 462, 505–506, 516
Albrecht, M., 312, 440
Alcinous (pseudo-), *see* Albinus of Smyrna
Alcuin of York, 283
Aldobrandini, Tommaso, 72
Aldrovandi Ulisse, 237
Alembert, Jean Le Rond d', 179, 208, 210
Aletino, *see* De Benedictis, Giovan Battista (Benedetto Aletino)
Alexander (Epicurean philosopher), 120
Alexander of Aphrodisias, 54, 119, 283, 376, 516
Alexander of Egeas, 283
Alexander of Hales, 43, 274, 359, 467
Alexander Severus (M. Aurelius Severus Alexander, Roman emperor), 357
Alexander the Great, 537, 540
al-Ghazzālī, 260
al-Kindī, 113, 135
Allacci, Leone, 284
Allemandet, *see* Lalemandet, Jean
Almaric of Bène, *see* Amalric (Amaury) of Bène
Alsted, Johann Heinrich, 55, 270, 333
Alt, K., 493–494, 508, 571, 573
Althusius, Johannes, 460
Amalric (Amaury) of Bène, 18, 120, 258, 274, 561

G. Piaia, G. Santinello (eds.), *Models of the History of Philosophy,* International Archives of the History of Ideas, Archives internationales d'histoire des idées,
DOI 10.1007/978-90-481-9507-7,

© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2011

Ambroise, Victor, *see* Martin, André
Ambrose (Aurelius Ambrosius), Bishop of Milan, St., 254, 273, 283
Amelius, 461
Amicla, 235
Ammarer, G., 311
Ammonius Sacca Alexandrinus, 258, 282, 453, 458, 465, 473, 501, 506, 516, 526–527
Anacharsis (Scythian philosopher), 142–143, 223
Anaxagoras of Clazomenae, 26, 67, 69, 113, 115, 123–124, 128–129, 131, 133, 143, 161, 198, 216, 224, 235, 255–256, 281, 296, 334, 336, 340, 357, 427, 453, 468, 472, 516, 522
Anaxarchus of Abdera, 143, 524
Anaximander of Miletus, 26, 113, 216, 281, 334, 340, 453, 471, 508, 516
Anaximenes of Miletus, 113, 120–121, 128, 281, 334, 340, 453
Andreoli, A., 239
Andronicus of Rhodes, 54, 134, 283
Anselm of Aosta (Anselm of Canterbury), St., 113, 530, 561
Anthusa of Antioch, 75
Antisthenes, 33, 456
Antoninus Pius (T. Aurelius Fulvus Boionius Arrius Antoninus, Roman emperor), 161, 354
Anubis, 141
Anunciação, Carlos da, 290
Apollonius of Tyana, 161, 283, 516
Apollonius of Tyre (Stoic philosopher), 74
Apuleius of Madaura, 243, 281, 333, 361, 515–516
Aquilonio, Francesco, 257
Aratus of Soli, 295
Arcesilaus, 53, 101, 123, 130, 143, 145, 170–171, 224, 256
Archelaus (the Philosopher), 80, 216, 281, 516
Archelaus of Chersonesus (the Poet), 114
Archimedes of Syracuse, 295
Archytas of Tarentum, 42, 275, 294, 504
Arete of Cyrene (daughter of Aristippus), 103
Aretino, Pietro, 44, 366
Argens, Jean-Baptiste de Boyer, marquis d', 136
Argiropulos, Johannes, 54
Aristides, 161
Aristippus of Cyrene, 33, 103, 144, 208, 242, 465
Aristo (Ariston) of Chios, 144
Aristophanes, 130, 295
Aristotle, vii, x, 3–6, 8–11, 17–21, 23–26, 28, 30–35, 37–38, 40–47, 54–57, 64, 66–67, 69–70, 81–86, 90, 97, 106, 113–115, 125, 127–130, 133, 142–144, 146, 150, 160, 164, 171–173, 192, 197–201, 214, 217, 220, 224, 230–233, *235–239*, 242–243, 245, 250, 252–253, 255, 257–261, 263–267, 271, 274–275, 285–286, 288, 293, 295–296, 304, 307–308, 320, 324–330, 334–336, 340–342, 358–359, 362, 365–366, 370, 376, 379, 383, 393, 397, 404–405, 408, 413, 417–420, 423, 426, 434, 437, 445–448, 454, 460–461, 467, 472–474, 495–497, 498, 503, 506, 517, 523–526, 528–531, 537, 544, 546–548, 569, 576
Armellini, Mariano, 221
Armogathe, J.-R., 12
Arnaldus de Villanova (Arnau de Vilanova), 7, 97, 202
Arnauld, Antoine, 16, 70, 162, 284, 425, 495
Arndt, H.W., 437, 439
Arnobius, 113
Arnold, Gottfried, *306*, 314, 432, 470, 526
Arnulf of Rochester, 20
Arpe, Petrus Fridericus, 426
Arriaga, Rodrigo de, 51
Arsakanyan, C.G., 210
Artemidorus of Daldis, 256
Aspasia, 75
Astorini, Elia, 268, 269, 277
Athenaeus of Attalia, 283
Athenagoras, 113, 118, 251, 256, 283
Athenodorus of Tarsus (Cananites), 283
Attalus I (King of Pergamon), 237
Augeas, 424
Augustine (Aurelius Augustinus), Bishop of Hippo, St., 10, 41, 44, 55–56, 59, 61, 63, 65–66, 68–69, 102, 113, 132, 160, 242, 243, 247, 251, 254, 256, 262, 273, 275, 283, 330, 495, 527, 530, 561, 568
Augustus, G. Julius Caesar (Roman emperor), 237, 290
Aulisio, Domenico, *218*, 270
Aureolus, *see* Peter of Auriole
Averroes (Ibn Rushd), 7, 43, 46, 54, 113, 119, 127–128, 143, 152–153, 155, 260, 283, 358, 437, 523, 531
Avicennas (Ibn Sīnā), 43, 44, 113, 152–154, 260, 283
Aymar, Jacques, 118
Azouvi, F., 13, 50, 157

B
Backhaus, J.G., 439
Bacon, Francis, 11, 36–37, 56–57, 113–114, 137, 172, 193, 199, 202–203, 218, 236, 240, 254, 257, 262, 267, 269, 287, 295, 305, 355, 359, 380, 384, 417, 446, 453, 455, 460, 472–474, 501, 513, 518, 531, 533
Bacon, Roger, *see* Roger Bacon
Badaloni, N., 228, 267
Badoer, Giovanni, 243
Baillet, Adrien, 9, 72, 98, 113, 131, 133, 545
Bal, K., 311
Baldini, U., 267
Baltus, Jean-François, *96*, 100, 307, 461, 527
Banfi, A., 137, 138, 568–569, 576
Barbaro, Ermolao, 54, 354, 366
Barbeyrac, Jean, xix
Barbier, A.A., 11, 152, 157
Barnard, F.M., 322
Baronio, Cesare (Cardinal), 118
Bartholmess, C., 140, 147
Bartoli, Sebastiano, 268
Basil (Bishop of Caesarea Mazaca), St., 256, 284
Basilides (Gnostic), 333, 340
Basnage, Henri (Basnage de Beauval), xx, 50, 399
Bassi, Laura Maria Caterina, 483
Basson, Sébastien, 20, 55, 274
Battaglia, F., 322
Battarano, I.M., 228
Battistini, A., 228
Baudouin, J. (Canon of Laval), 149–150
Baumeister, Friedrich Christian, 432
Baumgarten, Sigmund Jakob, 482–483
Bautz, W., 385
Bayle, Jacob, 106
Bayle, Pierre, viii, ix, x, xxi, 5, 6, 12, 20, 21, 47–51, 58, 68–69, 71–72, 78, 86–99, *100–139*, 140, 146–147, 161–162, 164, 167–168, 173–174, 178, 195, 199–200, 202–203, 205, 208, 222–223, 225, 239, 244–246, 256, 266, 289, 303, 341–342, 349–350, 358–359, 364, 367, 369, 390, 399, 405, 420, 423–424, 437, 478, 501, 510, 546, 559, 564–565, 568
Beaumont, Léon (Bishop of Saintes), 149
Beausobre, Isaac de, xix, *96*, 100
Beauvillier(s), Paul, duque of, 149
Becerra, A., 14
Becker, Balthasar, 360
Beckher, Wilhelm Heinrich, 545
Bede (the Venerable), 329
Beetz, M., 322
Behler, U., 573
Belgioioso, G., 50, 91, 226–227, 278
Bell, D., 311
Bembo, Pietro, 243
Ben Israel, Manasse, 444
Bénard, Ch., 136, 565, 575
Benitez, M., 13, 165
Bentivegna, G., 140
Bentley, Richard, 367
Berengarius of Tours, 561
Bergfeld, Chr., 463
Bergin, Th. G., 223, 559, 574
Bérigard, Claude Guillermet de, 55, 114, 259, 366, 518
Berkeley, George, 313, 472
Bernard of Clairvaix, St., 20, 113, 256, 329, 561
Bernardi della Mirandola, Antonio, 20
Bernier, François, 80, 120
Bernier, M.-A., 209
Bernoulli, Jean, 399
Berosus (Chaldean priest and historian), 273
Bertelli, S., 98, 225, 228, 239, 313
Berti, Alessandro Pompeo, 264, 267
Berti, E., 71, 572, 576
Bessarion, Ioannes (Cardinal), 20, 36, 47, 54, 304, 333, 354, 517
Besterman, Th., 210
Bianchi, L., 14–15, 138–139
Bianco, B., 311
Biel, Gabriel, 34, 80, 193, 252, 272, 283, 379
Bierling, Friedrich Wilhelm, 426
Bignon, Jean-Paul, 180
Bigone, Paolo, 240
Bigot, Emery, 73, 76
Bilfinger, Georg Bernhard, 360, 436
Bingham, Joseph, 349
Bion of Smyrna, 105
Bisorronde (Pisirrhonde) of Tarentum, 75
Bissinger, A., 439
Bitaud, Jean, 18, 20
Blackwell, C.W.T., v, xxii, 267, 314, 373, 377, 380, 385, 576–577
Blanke, H.W., 314
Bloch, E., 322
Bloch, O., 99
Blumenberg, H., 432
Bobba, R., 226–227, 291, 297
Boccaccio, Giovanni, 202
Boch, J., 147
Bochart, Samuel, 51, 140, 205, 219
Bodecker, H.E., 314

Bodin, Jean, 198, 424, 501
Boehm, Johann Christian, 387, *391–392*
Boethius, Anicius Manlius Severinus, 43, 144, 244, 283, 289, 443, 530, 561
Boeuf, E., 15
Böhme, Jakob, 419, 460, 518
Böhr, Chr., 323
Boileau, Nicolas, 31, 88
Bokobza Kahan, M., 14
Bonacina, G., 139, 148, 314, 577
Bonaventure of Bagnorea, St., 467, 530, 561
Bonbardi, Michele, 30
Bonciario, Marc'Antonio, 254
Boneschi, S., 222
Boockmann, H., 313
Bordelon, Laurent, *7*, 14
Borelli, Giovanni Alfonso, 90
Borghero, C., 13, 58
Born, Friedrich Gottlob, 482
Borrelli, A., 267
Borrello, Claudio, 290
Borromeo-Arese, Carlo IV (Viceroy of Naples), 229
Bortolotti, E., 239
Bosco, D., 49, 71
Bossuet, Jacques-Bénigne, 70, 140, 148, 205
Bost, H., 138–139, 148
Bottin, F., viii, xi, xvii, 301, 373, 378, 380
Bouchilloux, H., 87
Bougerel, Joseph, 71
Bouhours, Dominique, 49
Bouillier, F., xxi, 12, 14, 28, 71, 91, 147
Boureau-Deslandes, André-François, vii, viii, x, 6, 10, 28, 36, 47–48, 69, 71, 77, 93–94, 96–98, 118, 126, 134, 157, 165, 175, *177–211*, 222, 225, 277, 485, 520, 546, 553–554, 557, 568–569
Bourguet, Louis, xix
Boutier, J., 226
Boyle, Robert, 22, 36–37, 106, 172, 237, 258, 274, 276, 334, 367, 501
Bracciolini, Poggio, 366
Brahe, Tycho, 7, 98, 295, 446, 501
Braun, L., xxi, 14, 20–21, 29, 48–49, 58, 71, 78–79, 85, 87–88, 99–100, 135, 137, 139, 148, 151, 157, 166, 175, 188, 208, 210, 227, 246, 291, 305, 314–315, 322–323, 331, 337, 370, 373, 387, 392, 399, 428, 430, 432, 440, 457, 475, 486, 543, 570, 576
Brecht, M., 312
Bréhier, É., 28, 99, 210, 568, 576
Breithaupt, Christian, 387, *389*
Brémond, H., 71
Brockliss, L.W.B., 12, 91
Brown, S., 14, 147
Brucker, Carl Friedrich, 544
Brucker, Johann Jakob, v, vii, viii, ix, x, xi, xx, 6, 14, 17, 20–21, 25, 27–29, 48, 58, 76–79, 87–88, 93, 97, 100, 134–138, 146, 148, 159, 161–162, 164–166, 173, 178, 189, 193–194, 204, 206–207, 210, 222, 225, 245–246, 264, 290, 296–297, 303, 305, 310, 312, 314, 322–323, 331, 336–337, 343–344, 354, 356, 363, 372–373, 385, 388, 391–392, 399–403, 423, 428, 433–475, *477–577*
Brunet, G., 182
Bruno, Giordano, 113, 122, 139, 236, 257, 275, 284, 287, 366, 404–405, 432, 501, 513, 533, 557, 577
Brunschvicg, L., 168
Brush, C., 107
Brutus, Marcus Junius (the Younger), 143, 161, 283
Bucciantini, M., 240
Bucer, Martin, 45
Budde (Buddeus), Carl Friedrich, 372, 479
Budde (Buddeus), Johann Franz, viii, x, xx, xxi, 94, 134–136, 139, 162, 199, 222, 281, 284, 286–287, 289, 302–308, 312, 315–316, 330–331, 338, *343–373*, 374, 378, 380–381, 388, 393, 396, 399, 415–416, 419, 424, 429–430, 432, 434–437, 440–441, 445, 448–456, 459, 463, 473, 477–481, 486–487, 492–493, 495, 498, 500, 508, 511, 518–519, 521, 523–524, 535–536, 542, 547, 551, 554, 558–559, 567, 571–573
Buhle, Johann Gottlieb, 479, 564, 569, 574
Bühler, A., 314
Buhr, M., 314
Buonafede, Appiano (Agatopisto Cromaziano), 207, 210, 213, 225, 246, 264, 290–291, 560–561, 566, 571, 574
Buonanni, Filippo, 229, 240
Buragna, Carlo, 251
Burigny, *see Lévesque de Burigny, Jean*
Burnand, L., 99
Burnet, Gilbert (Bishop of Salisbury), 247, 295
Burnet, Thomas, 162, 195, 222, 263, 295, 304, 334, 348, 354, 356, 404, 406, 518, 539, 544, 546
Burns, J.V., 439
Bury, E., 14–15
Busch, F.J., 71
Busson, H., 12

C
Cabeo, Niccolò, 233, 237, 257
Cacciapuoti, F., 267
Cacciatore, G., 13, 439
Caesar, Gaius Julius, 332
Cain, 53, 318–319, 376, 515
Calcidius (Chalcidius), 281, 333, 458
Caligula, G. Julius Caesar Augustus Germanicus (Roman emperor), 171
Calixto, J.A., 561
Calogerà, Angelo, 227, 277
Calvin, John, 45
Cambi, M., 278
Caminiti Pennarola, L., 78
Campanella, Tommaso, 7, 13, 19, 21, 38, 162, 258, 261, 284, 287, 355, 366, 405, 446, 460, 472, 501, 533
Campanile, Gaspare, 271
Campo, M., 439–440
Camusat, Denis-François, xix
Cano, Melchior, 19–20, 244, 261
Canone, E., 14, 138, 311, 385
Cantarutti, G., 575
Cantelli, G., 15, 118, 122, 128, 138
Cantillo, C., 226
Cantillo, G., 13
Canziani, G., 10, 12, 14, 139
Capasso, Giambattista, viii, x, 48, 134, 213, 216, 218–222, 245, *278–291*, 294, 371, 403
Capasso, Nicola, 278–279, 281, 287–289
Capitani, P., 15
Caponigri, R., 228
Capra, C., 226
Caracalla, M. Aurelius Severus Antoninus (Roman emperor), 376
Carcassonne, E., 151
Cardano, Girolamo, 34, 36, 113, 153, 155, 168, 172, 202, 237, 259, 354, 366, 501, 513
Cardoso, Isacco, 257
Carneades, 43, 51, 101, 113, 115, 118–119, 123, 130–131, 224
Carpocrates of Alexandria (Gnostic), 272, 340
Carr, J.L., 177, 206, 210
Cartaud de La Vilate, François, 185
Casaubon, Isaac, 76
Casaubon, Méric, 46
Casimir of Toulouse, 55
Casini, P., 99, 226, 575
Cassini, Gian Domenico, 557, 558
Cassirer, E., 12, 98, 110, 130, 137, 310, 313, 568, 575
Cassius, Georg Andreas, 289, 392, 399–400, 402, 431
Castiglione, Baldassarre, 22
Castronovo, V., 226
Cataldi Madonna, L., 439
Catana, L., 313, 385, 432, 577
Catherine of Alexandria, St., 75
Catius (Epicurean philosopher), 283
Cato, Marcus Porcius (the Censor), 161
Cato of Utica, Marcus Porcius, 283
Caussin, Nicolas, 257
Cavaillé, J.-P., 14–15
Cavazutti, Girolamo, 243
Cavazza, M., 239
Cellarius (Keller), Christoph, 310
Celsus, Cornelius, 144, 283, 516
Cenàculo, Manuel do, Bishop of Évora, 561–562, 571, 574
Cenerini, L., 77
Cerati, Gaspare, 222
Cesalpino, Andrea, 113, 121, 259, 354, 366
Changuion, François, 182, 190
Chapelain, Jean, 76
Charlemagne (Holy Roman emperor), 273, 465, 538
Charles II (King of England), 237
Charles V (Holy Roman emperor), 190, 424
Charles-Daubert, F., 12
Charleton, Walter, 354
Charondas of Catania, 515
Charron, Pierre, 113
Chasseneux, Barthélémy de, 273
Chatelain, J.-M., 13
Chauvin, Étienne, *14*
Cherbury, *see* Herbert of Cherbury, Edward
Chérel, A., 151
Chevreau, Urbain, 133
Cheyne, George, 367
Chométy, Ph., 13
Chosroes (King of Persia), 243, 245
Chouet, Jean-Robert, 50
Christina (Queen of Sweden), 139
Chrysippus of Soli, 113, 115–119, 186
Ciafardone, R., 311
Ciampoli, Giovanni, 231, 236, 239, 276
Cicero, Marcus Tullius, 6, 10, 25, 30, 39–40, 43, 46, 55, 57–58, 66–69, 86, 90, 97, 102, 109, 117, 121, 131–132, 134, 136, 142–144, 161–162, 169, 241–242, 250, 253–254, 256, 261, 283, 285, 295, 320, 336, 354, 357, 369, 402, 404, 412, 421, 445, 448, 467–468, 515

Cioranescu, R., 11, 99
Cirillo, Nicola, 278, 281, 288
Clair, P., 5, 61, 71
Clarke, Samuel, 178, 367
Claudian (Claudius Claudianus), 241
Clave, Étienne de, 18, 20
Clea, 75
Clement of Alexandria, 20, 64, 67, 69, 242, 251, 255–256, 274, 282, 293, 295, 330, 361, 453, 458, 460–461, 495, 517, 519, 527, 546
Clement XI, Pope, 229, 268
Clericus, *see* Le Clerc (Clericus), Jean
Clericuzio, A., 240
Clovis (King of the Franks), 166
Coccejus, Samuel, 451
Cohen Rosenfield, L., 49
Colapietra, R., 226
Colbert, Jean-Baptiste, 177–179
Colbert de Croissy, Charles, 21
Colerus, Johann Christoph, 399, 404
Collins, Anthony, 365, 391
Colonna, Francesco Mario Pompeo, *95*, 100
Columbus, Christopher, 237, 423
Comenius (Komensky), John Amos, 349, 354, 472, 501, 518
Comnena, Anna, 74, 193
Comparato, V.I., 86, 217–218, 227, 267
Condamine, Charles-Marie de La, 180
Condillac, Étienne Bonnot de, 137, 162, 177, 182, 569
Condorcet, Jean-Antoine-Nicolas Caritat de, 569
Confucius, 7, 10, 90, 260, 295, 355, 435, 503, 518
Conlon, P.M., 11
Constantine the Great (C. Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus Augustus, Roman emperor), 219
Conti, Antonio, 222, 227, 270, 276
Conti, V., 227
Copernicus, Nicholas, 7, 80, 98, 205, 284, 295, 446, 501
Copeti, Pasquale, 296
Corbinelli, Jean, 129
Cordara, Giulio Cesare, 296–297
Corneille, Pierre, 130
Cornelio, Tommaso, 247, 261, 265, 267–268, 275–276
Cornutus, Lucius Annaeus, 516
Corr, C.A., 439
Corsano, A., 110, 115, 138, 268
Corsini, Odoardo, x, 213, 221, 290–291, *292–297*
Costa, G., 100
Costantino, Antonio, *219*, 227
Coste, Pierre, x, 4, 7, 9–11, 48, *78–88*, 93, 239, 265, 553
Cotta, Gaius Aurelius, 283
Coulet, H., 209
Couplet, Philippe, 355
Cousin, V., 166, 246, 479, 564–565, 568, 571, 573, 575
Cozzando, Leonardo, x, 105, 213, 216, *240–246*, 263, 289, 336, 406
Cragg, O.B., 209
Crasta, F., 13
Cratylus, 488, 504
Cremonini, Cesare, 44, 114, 259, 333, 354, 366
Crescimbeni, Giovanni Mario, 268, 270–271
Crispini, F., 267
Cristofolini, P., 228
Crivelli, Giovanni, *221*, 227
Croce, B., 262, 265, 266, 268, 276–277, 291, 559–560, 566, 574–575
Crocker, L.G., 99
Cromaziano, *see* Buonafede, Appiano
Cronk, N., 210
Crophius, Philipp Jakob, 479
Crousaz, Jean-Pierre de, *97*, 100, 145, 148
Crucitti Ulrich, F.B., 277
Cudworth, Ralph, 125, 135, 222, 286, 356–357, 363, 367, 446, 521, 525, 533, 546
Cuoco, V., 293
Cureau de La Chambre, Marin, 38
Cyril (Patriarch of Alexandria), St., 19, 330

D

D'Andrea, Francesco, 226, 247, 265, 267
Dacier, André, 96, 170
Dacier, Anne, 74, 77
Dagen, J., 13, 71, 99, 100, 148
Daillé, Jean, 96, 307
Dal Pra, M., 314, 576
Daled, P.-F., 211
Damascius, 501, 537
Damo (daughter of Pythagoras), 103
Dancer, John, 30
Dandini, Girolamo, 20
Daniel (Prophet), 55
Dante Alighieri, 202, 251
Danz, Johann Andreas, 479
David (King of Israel), 205
David of Dinant, 120, 258, 274, 366
De Beer, E.S., 88

De Benedictis, Giovan Battista (Benedetto Aletino), 217, 227, 248, 275
De Ciampis, C., 267
De Dominis, Marc'Antonio, 259
De Giovanni, B., 267
De Keijzer, M., vi
De Liguori, G., 227
De Maria, A., 13
De Martino, G., 226, 228
De Martino, Pietro Antonio, 269
De Micillis, G., 291
De Robert, Ph., 138
De Vleeschauwer, J.H., 439
De Weerdt-Pilorge, M.-P, 49
De Wulf, M., 414
Degérando (De Gérando), J.-M., xxii, 21, 29, 88, 136, 148, 151, 157, 166, 207, 210, 246, 291, 479, 564, 575
Dejean, J., 12
Del Prete, A., 13, 15, 147
Del Torre, Filippo (Bishop of Adria), 222
Del Torre, M.A., xxii, 10, 14–15, 21, 49, 78, 88, 100, 139, 148, 177, 184, 208, 210, 268, 291, 314, 323, 373, 387, 393, 399, 429, 432, 570, 576
Della Casa, Giovanni, 22, 72, 366
Delvolvé, G., 137
Demades, 43
Demetrius Phalereus, 43
Demetrius the Cynic, 283
Democritus af Abdera, 33, 37, 64, 66, 86, 90, 102, 113, 118–119, 123, 127, 141, 143, 146, 190, 214, 218, 224, 233, 235–236, 239, 251–258, 263, 266, 274–275, 285, 296, 317, 334, 336, 354, 358, 444, 465, 467, 472, 478, 497, 516, 524–525, 533, 539–541, 552
Demonattes, 284
Demosthenes, 30, 43
Deneys, H., 210
Deneys-Tunney, A., 209
Deregibus, A., 138
Des Maizeaux, Pierre, xix, 107
Desautels, A.R., 99
Descartes, René, v, xi, 5, 7–11, 13, 23–26, 36–39, 43, 48, 51–52, 55–56, 58, 61, 69–70, 79–80, 82–88, 90, 97, 106, 113–114, 125, 146, 153–156, 162, 171–172, 178, 181, 189, 201–203, 205, 217, 220, 222, 226, 237, 239, 257–258, 260–262, 264–269, 275, 280, 286–289, 295–296, 308, 317, 319–320, 333, 335, 346, 355, 359–360, 380, 393, 413, 423, 437, 446, 453, 455, 460–462, 465, 468, 472, 474, 501, 513, 518, 533–534, 539, 545, 565, 567–568
Desfontaines, Pierre-François Guyot, 182
Desgabets, Robert, 69
Deslandes, see Boureau-Deslandes, André-François
Des Maizeaux, Pierre, xix
Di Capua, Leonardo, 247–248, 251, 261, 265, 267
Di Liscia, D.A., 576
Diacceto, Francesco, 113
Diagoras of Melos, 112, 115, 135, 187, 524
Diaz, F., 165
Dibon, P., 138
Dicearchus (Peripatetic philosopher), 115
Dick, J., 313
Dickinson, Edmund, 354
Diderot, Denis, 158, 165, 177, 179, 210, 557–558, 568
Didymus (Grammarian), 75, 283
Didymus of Alexandria (Didymus the Blind), 283
Dietelmair, Johann Augustin, 484
Digby, Kenelm, 45
Dilthey, W., 313, 567
Dini, A., 147
Diodoros Cronos, 74
Diodorus Siculus, 243
Diogenes Laertius, 5, 7–8, 11, 34, 39, 46, 72–78, 85–86, 90, 98, 106, 118, 132, 133, 143–144, 149, 150, 163, 169, 171, 173, 193, 207, 208, 233–234, 236–237, 241, 242–243, 247, 253, 263, 271, 281, 282, 294, 330, 333, 363, 406, 409, 422, 444, 448, 460, 461, 462, 464, 468, 470, 498, 508, 515, 516–519, 542, 544–546, 552, 553, 566, 569, 576
Diogenes of Apollonia, 119, 121, 132, 340
Diogenes of Sinope (the Cynic), 150, 234, 404, 456, 540
Dion (Tyrant of Syracuse), 161, 447
Diones Chrysostomus, 283
Dionysius the Areopagite (pseudo-), 243, 283, 361
Dionysius the Elder (Tyrant of Syracuse), 447
Dionysius the Younger (Tyrant of Syracuse), 447, 517, 527
Dohna, Friedrich von, 101
Donati, Bernardino, 20
Donnert, E., 463
Doppermann, K., 312

Doria, Paolo Mattia, 164, 166, *219–222*, 227, 278, 559, 574
Dorn, Johann Christoph, xx, 20, 48, 134, 245, 284, 289, 308, 371, 545
Dougnac, M.-T., 147
Draco (Lawgiver), 515
Dreier, Christian, 518
Dreitzel, H., 312
Dreyfus, G., 208
Drouin, S., 209
Du Cerceau, Jean-Antoine, 149
Du Hamel, Jean-Baptiste, x, 6, 8, 9, 11, *21–29*, 59, 104, 189, 257, 263, 296, 304, 495, 518, 606
Du Lignon, Jacques, xix
Du Pin, Louis-Ellies, 20, 21, 132
Du Rondel, Jacques, 86–87, 254, 448, 454
Du Sauzet, Henri, xix, xxi
Dubois, E.Th., 29, 49
Duchet, M., 99
Dufays, J.-M., 314
Duns Scotus, *see* Johannes Duns Scotus
Dupont-Bertris, 94, *151–157*, 189
Dupront, A., 147
Dupuy, Pierre, 139
Durandus of Saint-Pourçain, 16, 34, 80, 193, 252, 272, 272, 283, 379, 383, 517

E
Ecfantus of Syracuse, 253
Eckhart, *see* Johannes (Meister) Eckhart
École, J., 437, 439
Edzardus, Sebastian, 383
Egger, Johannes, 148
Egizio, Matteo, 268
Ehrenberger, Bonifatius Heinrich, 452
Ehrhardt, W.E., 576
Elias (Prophet), 438
Elswich, Johann Hermann von, 16, 47, 245, *308*, 330–331, 420, 432
Empedocles of Agrigentum, 121, 142, 219, 242, 256, 275, 294, 465
Enfield, William, 562–563, 575
Ennius, Quintus, 283
Enoch, 65, 333, 515
Epicharmus of Kos, 142
Epictetus, 169, 283, 409, 412, 458, 516
Epicurus, 5, 8, 17, 24, 26, 33, 35, 57, 65, 83–86, 90, 97, 102, 106, 109, 113, 115, 126–127, 131–133, 145, 150, 171–172, 188, 190, 199, 201, 205, 208, 233–235, 239, 241–242, 245, 251–255, 257–258, 262–263, 266, 274–275, 285, 296, 309, 314, 329, 335–336, 340, 354, 358–359, 362, 368, 373, 377, 379–380, 385, 444, 448, 453–454, 461–462, 467, 472, 497, 524–525, 539, 552, 576
Epimenides, 427, 515
Epiphanius of Salamis, St., 546
Erasmus of Rotterdam, 54, 113, 170, 172, 333, 335, 415, 420, 434
Erillus (Herillus) of Carthage (or of Chalcedon), 143
Eriugena, *see* Johannes Scotus Eriugena
Esberg, Johann, 77
Estienne, Henri, 75
Estouteville, Guillaume d' (Cardinal), 18
Ettmüller, Michael, 276
Euclid of Alexandria, 114
Euclid of Megara, 42, 187, 488, 504
Eudocia, Aelia (Athenais), 75
Eugene IV (Pope), 234
Eunapius of Sardis, 149
Euripides, 43, 130
Eurydice (wife of Pollianus), 75
Eusebius of Caesaria (Bishop), 75, 145, 330, 546
Eve, 376
Eyring, Jeremias Nicolaus, 401

F
Fabbianelli, F., 373
Fabri, Honoré, 38, 576
Fabricius, Johann Albrecht, 17, 159, 164, 166, *309–310*, 399, 437, 545
Facciolati, Jacopo, *214–215*, 217
Falco, G., 49, 225
Fantuzzi, Giovanni, 239
Fardella, Michelangelo, 276
Fattori, M., 14, 267, 311, 314, 576
Faxardo Requesens y Zunica, Joachín Ferrante, marquis of los Velez (Viceroy of Naples), 246
Faydit, Pierre-Valentin, 95
Fazio, D.M., 576
Feder, Johann Georg, 457, 574
Feind, Barthold, 331–337
Feldmann, E., 385, 430, 432, 440, 450, 457, 575
Fenaroli, Ippolito, 241
Fénelon, François de Salignac de la Mothe, 77, 91, 94–95, *148–151*, 156
Féret, P., 21
Ferrari, S., 575
Ferraro, D., 14
Ferrone, V., 226–227

Feuerlinus (Feuerlein), Jakob Wilhelm, 345
Ficinus, Marsilius (Marsilio Ficino), 5, 34, 36, 44, 46, 54, 113, 170, 172, 220, 239, 244, 253, 258, 275, 281, 320, 333, 335, 354, 445, 499, 517, 527
Fink, B., 209
Fisch, M. H., 223, 559, 574
Fleischer, Johann Lorenz, 316
Fleischmann, M., 322
Fleury, Claude, *7–8*, 139, 153, 157, 276
Floridi, L., 58
Florimonte, Galeazzo, 113
Fludd, Robert, 252, 333, 356, 460, 465, 518
Fonseca, Pedro de, 54
Fontenelle, Bernard de Bovier de, 11, 15, 21, 27–28, 81, 156, 162, 195, 208
Foresti, Antonio, *216*, 227
Formey, Jean-Henri-Samuel, xix, xxi, 207, 210, 478, 553, 557, 574
Forlivesi, M., vi
Forti, F., 49, 225
Förtsch, Michael, 479
Foucher, Simon, *9–10*, 14, 69, 147, 246
Fracastoro, Girolamo, 172
Francis I (King of France), 17
Francis III (Duque of Modena), 292
Franck, A., 136, 146, 208
Francke, August Hermann, 306, 313, 315, 343, 399, 436, 508
François, E., 574
Franz, M., 302, 305, 577
Frederick II (Holy Roman emperor), 233, 303
Frederick II (King of Prussia), 414, 480
Frederick III (Prince-elector of Brandenburg, later Frederick I, King of Prussia), 73, 315, 325
Fréret, Nicolas, 158
Fréron, Élie-Cathérine, xx, 180, 206
Fresnoy, Nicolas Lenglet du, xx, 69, 77, *97*, 98
Freyer, J., xxii, 314, 373, 430–432, 566–567, 576
Frickius, Johannes, 437
Frigo, G., 135, 139, 575
Frisius, Johann Jakob, 406, 553
Fueter, E., 313
Fülleborn, Georg Gustav, xi, 388, 431
Fumaroli, M., 12, 49, 99
Furet, F., 99

G

Gäbler, U., 312
Gabriel, F., 15
Gale, Theophilus, 263, 337, 406, 504, 546, 553
Gale, Thomas, 73
Galen, 43, 254, 283, 295, 465
Galetti, P., 228
Galeus, *see* Gale, Theophilus
Galiani, Celestino, 278
Gallienus, P. Licinius Egnatius Gallienus (Roman emperor), 103
Gama Caeiro, F.J. da, 561–562, 574–575
Garber, D., 12
Gardair, G.-M., 226
Gardt, A., 311
Garin, E., xxii, 14, 36, 49, 99, 116, 135, 137, 139, 148, 157, 177, 184, 203, 208, 210, 219, 222, 225–228, 236, 240, 248, 251, 266, 268–269, 274–275, 277–278, 291, 297, 314, 355, 373, 387, 428, 432, 560, 569, 575, 576
Garrett, D., 315
Garve, Christian, xi
Gassendi, Pierre, 5, 7, 9, 17, 20, 35–37, 53, 55, 57, 61, 69, 80–81, 83, 90, 97–98, 102, 105, 114, 133, 153–155, 171–172, 178, 205, 217, 220, 233–234, 237, 239, 242, 245, 248, 250, 254, 257, 262, 274, 276, 285, 288, 294–296, 304, 309, 320, 327, 336, 354, 380, 448, 455, 518, 525, 552
Gaudin, Alexis, 134
Gautier, Hubert, 77, *97*, 100, 204, 553
Gaza, Theodore, 335
Geissler, R., 175, 177, 180, 182–184, 205, 208–210
Geldsetzer, L., 14, 314, 392, 399, 430, 432, 575
Gellius, Aulus, 145, 251, 409, 421, 468
Gemelli, B., 240
Gemistus, *see* Pletho, Georgius Gemistus
Genovesi, Antonio, 134, 165–166, 206, 213, 215, *222*, 225–227, 290, 296, 371, 385, 559–560
Gentile, M., 568–569, 576
Gentzken, Friedrich, 290, 302, 343, 371, 391, 430, 434, *440–450*, 456, 468–469, 508, 511, 554
George II (King of Great Britain), 511, 554
George of Trebizond, *see* Trapezuntius, Georgius
Gerhard, Ephraim, x, 330, 387–389, *393–399*, 407, 452, 491
Gerhard, Johann, 475
Gerhardt, C.J., 305, 390
Gerlach, H.M., 439
Gersen, Giovanni, 16

Gerson, Jean le Charlier, 329
Gesner, Johann Matthias, 349
Getto, G., 226, 271, 277–278
Giacobbe, L., 297
Giacon, C., 393, 432
Giannantoni, G., xii
Giannone, Pietro, 219, 265, 289
Giansiracusa, L., 268
Gierl, M., 312
Gigliotti, G., 14
Gilbert, William, 56, 233, 276
Gildemeister, C.H., 30
Gillot, H., 12, 49
Gimma, Giacinto, x, 218–219, *268–278*, 286
Ginanni, Pietro Paolo, *219–220*, 221, 227
Giocanti, S., 15
Gioia, Flavio, 237
Giorgio (Zorzi) Veneto, Francesco, 286
Giovanni d'Andrea, 103
Giovio, Paolo, 366
Girardi, R., 278
Girbal, F., 5, 425
Glass, Salomon, 349
Goclenius (Göckel), Rudolf, 244
Godart, Pierre, *9*
Gomes Machado, J.A., 291, 561
Gómez Tutor, J.I., 287, 439
Goré, J.-L., 151
Gorgias of Leontini, 142
Gori, Anton Francesco, 293
Gorlaeus, David, 114
Gottsched, Johann Christoph, 107, 483
Gouhier, H., 12–13, 151
Goujet, Claude-Pierre, xix
Gouverneur, S., 15
Grácian, Baltasar, 501
Granet, François, xix, 16, 47
Gravius (de Grau), Abraham, 222, 253, 263, 276, 361, 553
Gregory I the Great (Pope) St., 529
Gregory IX (Pope), 18–19
Gregory of Nazianzus, St., 113, 251, 273, 284
Gregory of Nyssa, St., 256, 284
Gregory of Rimini, 113
Gregory Thaumaturgus (Gregory of Neocaesarea), St., 282
Gregory, T., 15, 267
Grell, Ch., 12–13, 314
Grene, M., 14
Greschat, M., 312
Grès-Gayer, J.-M., 21
Grew, Nehemiah, 367
Griggio, C., 227
Grillo-Borromeo, Clelia, 271
Grimaldi, Costantino, *216–218*, 221, 227, 247, 264–265, 268, 275
Grimm, G.E., 311
Grischow, Augustinus, 349
Gronovius (Gronow), Johann Friedrich, 337
Gros, J.-M., 134
Grotius, Hugo (Huig de Groot), 113, 114, 158, 315, 319–320, 327, 346, 360, 420, 447, 453, 463, 501
Guarini, Giovan Battista, 254
Guelloz, S., 147
Gueroult, M., xxii, 13, 15, 29, 78, 88, 100, 137, 139, 146, 148, 177, 208–210, 223, 314, 576
Guion, B., 13
Gumposch, V. Ph., xxii, 322, 337, 398, 573
Gundling, Nicolaus Hieronymus, xxi, 302, *309*, 347, 406, 451, 455, 554
Guse, A., 337

H

Haag, Ém., 11
Haag, Eug., 11
Haas, H., 311
Habert, Henric-Louis, lord of Montmort, 17
Hadrian (P. Aelius Hadrianus, Roman emperor), 34
Hagar, 330, 413
Haldane, E.S., 388, 541, 575
Halley, Edmund, 178
Halperin, S.W., 13
Ham, 272, 326
Hamann, Johann Georg, 30, 48–49, 207, 210
Hamberger, Georg Albrecht, 399
Hammer, K., 314
Hammerstein, N., 313
Hampton, J., 88
Hansch, Michael Gottlieb, 495
Hardouin, Jean, 70–71
Harlay de Champvallon, François de (Archbishop of Paris), 19
Harles, Gottlieb Christoph, 310
Harrison, C.T., 137
Hartmann, Georg Volckmar, 372, *437*
Hartung, G., 311, 322, 463
Harvey, William, 43, 56, 90, 237, 258, 276, 460, 501
Hasaeus, Theodor, 404
Hatin, E., 12
Hazard, P., xxii, 6, 12, 29, 36, 87, 98, 137, 301, 322, 421
Headley, J.M., 21
Heereboord, Adrian, 257, 263, 289

Hegel, G.W.F., vii, xi, 137, 184, 207–208, 388, 428–429, 541, 564, 566–567, 569, 571, 575
Heimsoeth, H., 439
Heineccius, Johann Gottlieb, 302, 391, 434, *457–463*, 469
Heineccius, Johann Michael, 457
Heinsius, Daniel, 76, 284
Heinsius, Wilhelm, xx, 331, 342, 372, 398, 431, 450, 457, 463, 469, 475, 573
Hell, L., 348
Heloise of Argenteuil, 74
Hennings, Justus Christian, 555, 574
Henry of Ghent, 241–244
Heraclides Ponticus, 256
Heraclitus of Ephesus, 64, 96, 113, 131, 142–143, 170, 173, 190, 256, 321, 357, 422, 445, 465, 495, 497, 504, 505
Heraclitus of Tyre, 283
Herbert of Cherbury, Edward, 259, 262
Hercules, 424
Herdtrich, Christian Wolfgang, 355
Herlicius, David, 114
Hermes (Mercurius) Trismegistus, 40, 255, 295, 464
Hermias of Atarneus, 123, 537
Hermippus of Ephesus, 34
Hermodorus, 34
Hermogenes, 504
Herodotus, 153, 295
Herre, F., 573
Hesiod, 256, 285, 500, 515
Heumann, Christoph August, ix, xi, xx, 5–6, 19–21, 58, 78–79, 86–88, 93, 100, 136–137, 162–163, 165–166, 188, 208, 213, 222, 225, 245–246, 289–290, 302, 308, 310, 336–337, 346, 352, 356, 387–389, 391–392, *399–432*, 436, 438, 442–444, 450, 456, 462, 465, 468, 472, 477–478, 482, 484–486, 490–492, 508, 510, 514–515, 519–521, 523, 529, 547, 549, 550, 552, 554–555, 573
Heurnius, Otto, 284, 485
Heyd, M., 58
Heydenreich, Karl Heinrich, 560
Hiero II (Tyrant of Syracuse), 237
Hierocles of Alexandria, 501, 506
Hillenaar, H., 151
Hinrichs, C., 312
Hinske, N., 373
Hipparchus, 238
Hippo (daughter of Chiro), 74–75
Hirsch, E., 372
Hobbes, Thomas, 25, 36–37, 45, 52, 58, 114, 137, 172, 178, 193, 203, 259–260, 284, 287–288, 320, 322, 354, 420, 423, 427, 447, 472, 474, 501, 513
Hochstrasser, T.J., 311
Hoffmann, Daniel, 518
Hofmann, J.E., 439
Holstenius, Lucas, 244
Holtz, G., 15
Holzey, H., 312
Homer, 30, 43, 66, 143, 224, 285, 295, 319, 339, 389, 500, 515
Horace (Q. Horatius Flaccus), 35, 78, 102, 152, 256, 283, 295
Horn (Hornius), Georg, vii, ix, xi, 3, 5, 19, 51, 58, 77, 87, 105, 116, 133–134, 156, 205, 217, 243–245, 261, 263, 283, 289, 294, 336, 361, 380, 388–389, 397, 406, 409, 428, 485, 519, 546, 553
Hübinger, G., 314
Hübner, Johann, 508
Huet, Pierre-Daniel (Bishop of Avranches), 9, 12, 59, 66, 69, 76, 79, 94–95, 97, 101, *139–148*, 159, 168, 205, 219, 223, 225, 263, 275–276, 285, 289, 295, 327, 330, 337, 341, 501, 504, 518, 521, 553
Hugh of St. Victor, 162
Hume, David, 482
Hunter, J., 323, 399
Hurel, D.-O., 12
Huss, Jan, 259
Hutchison, R., 88
Hutten, Ulrich von, 434
Hutton, S., vi
Hypat(h)ia of Alexandria, 75, 243, 281, 501
Hyperides, 43

I

Ibn Esra, Abraham, 517
Ingegno, A., 14
Intorcetta, Prospero, 355
Invernizzi, G., 506
Irenaeus (Bishop of Lyon), St., 241
Isaac (Patriarch), 64
Ishmael (eldest son of Abraham), 330
Iurilli, A., 277
Ivanini, Giovan Battista, 257

J

Jacob (Patriarch), 64
Jaffro, L., 209
Jakob, Ludwig Heinrich, 134
Jamblicus, 281, 283

Jansen (Jansenius), Cornelius (Bishop of Ypres), 70
Japhet, 219, 272, 326
Jaumann, H., 99, 322
Jehl, R., 575
Jeremiah (Prohet), 57
Jerome of Prague, 259, 284
Jerome, St., 19, 273
Job (Patriarch), 64
Jöcher, Christian, Gottlieb, xx, 322, 331, 337, 342, 372, 398, 431, 437, 450, 457, 463, 475, 573
Johannes (Meister) Eckhart, 258
Johannes Duns Scotus, 34–35, 55, 80, 113, 153–154, 201, 242, 244, 261, 295, 359, 454, 467, 495, 562
Johannes Scotus Eriugena, 258, 283, 530
John Hus, *see* Huss, Jan
John of Damascus (Johannes Damascenus), St., 113, 193
John of Salisbury, 113, 162
John Stobaeus, 284, 542
John V (King of Portugal), 279–281, 285–286, 291
Jonsius (Jönsen), Johann, xx, 8, 10, 14, 16, 20–21, 48–49, 75, 78, 105, 111, 131, 133–134, 138, 187, 205, 218, 245–246, 284, 289, 294, 303, 308, 310, 323, 331, 342, 352, 363, 371, 373, 388, 406, 432, 545
Joseph (Patriarch), 64, 464
Joseph I (King of Portugal), 291
Josephus Flavius, 90, 233, 504
Julia Domna (wife of Roman Emperor Lucius Septimius Severus), 76
Julian the Apostate (F. Claudius Iulianus, Roman emperor), 10, 80, 283
Jurieu, Pierre, 107, 399
Justin the Martyr, St., 160, 243, 283, 295, 361, 461, 495, 517, 527, 546
Justinian the Great (F. Petrus Sabbatius Iustinianus, Byzantine emperor), 20, 143

K

Kahle, Ludwig Martin, xxi, 310, 437, 456, 553
Kant, Immanuel, viii, xi, 385, 428–431, 433, 435, 440, 449–450, 479, 482, 556, 564, 567, 570, 574–576
Kapitza, P.K., 311
Keckermann, Bartholomäus, 55, 114, 244, 446, 455
Kelley, D.R., 312, 314, 373, 399, 432
Kemp Smith, N., 556, 574
Kepler, Johann, 114, 162, 472–474
Kervegan, J.F., 463
Kessler, E., 576
Killy, W., 385
Kircher, Athanasius, 233
Kirchner, J., 313, 323, 337, 373, 385, 431
Klaus, L., 322
Klein, W.P., 311
Klesczewski, R., 29
Knutzen, Martin, 449–450
Koelerus (Köhler), Johann David, 426
Koellen, F.C.A., 568, 575
Kors, A.Ch., 12
Kortholt, Christian, 309
Krauss, W., 311, 576
Kreimendahl, L., 12, 139
Kuhles, D., 313
Kuhlmann, Quirinus, 419
Kühn, Joachim, 73
Kühnel, M., 322
Kümper, H., 457
Kusukawa, S., 267

L

La Bruyère, Jean de, 78, 156, 180
La Chambre, *see* Cureau de La Chambre, Marin
La Chapelle, Armand de, xix
La Fontaine, Jean de, 78
La Harpe, J. de, 100
La Mettrie, Julien Offray de, 472
La Mothe Le Vayer, François de, 5, 7, *10*, 12, 15, 101, 132–133, 146, 170, 205, 254, 263, 285, 320, 518
La Roche, Michel de, xix, xxi
La Rochefoucauld, François IV, duque of, 50, 180
Labrousse, É., xxii, 58, 103, 105, 107–110, 112–113, 115, 118, 120, 122, 125, 138
Lacerda, Aragon, Luis, duque of Medinacoeli (Viceroy of Naples), 247
Lach, D.F., 440
Lachenschmid, R., 71
Lactantius, L. Caecilius Firmianus, 75, 142, 251, 258, 282, 295, 403, 427, 453, 546
Lacydes of Cyrene, 101
Laelius, Gaius, 69
Laerke, M., 148
Laertius, *see* Diogenes Laertius
Lagarrigue, B., 88
Lagrée, J., 139
Lalemandet, Jean, 51
Lambin, Denis, 274
Lamezan, Adrian, 290, 434, *463–469*

Lamoignon, Chrétien-François de, 31
Lamoignon, Guillaume de, 29, 31, 33, 40
Lamy, Bernard, *4–5*, 10, 14, 60, 69, 98
Lana, Francesco, 257
Landucci, S., 165
Lanfranc of Pavia (Archbishop of Canterbury), 34, 193, 283, 530
Lange, Johann Joachim, 436–437
Laudin, G., 12
Launoy, Jean de, 3, 6–9, *15–21*, 46–47, 69, 90, 133, 171, 173, 263, 276, 289, 295, 308, 406
Le Brun, J., 49
Le Clerc (Clericus), Jean, xix, xx, 50, 86, 88, 96, 108, 159, 163, 264, 284, 307, 314, 341, 357, 371, 399, 409, 420, 426, 453, 461, 499, 527, 576
Le Gendre de Saint-Aubin, Gilbert-Charles, 48, 94, 98, 134–136, *166–175*, 177, 185, 277
Le Grand, Antoine, 70, 263
Leah, 413
Lecocq, A.-M., 12
Leduc-Fayette, D., 151
Lefèvre d'Étaples (Faber Stapulensis), Jacques, 113
Lefèvre, G., 113, 283
Lehmann, H., 312
Lehmann, Johann Jakob, 345
Lehmann-Brauns, S., 315, 323, 432
Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm, v, ix, x, 27–28, 71, 86, 109–110, 113, 136, 153–155, 189, 201, 301–302, 305, 315, 317, 344–345, 355, 360, 362, 374, 390, 399, 411–412, 436–437, 441, 446, 458, 472, 474, 481, 487, 495, 498, 501, 513–514, 518, 523, 533–536, 545, 547, 559, 564–565, 572
Leinsle, U., 373
Leiter, B., 315
Lenfant, Jacques, xix
Lennon, Th.M., 148
Leo IX (Pope), St., 20
Leonico Tomeo, Niccolò, 113
Leroy Turcan, I., 78
Lescalopier, Pierre, 121
Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim, 98, 311, 405
Leucippus, 36, 172, 252, 255, 274, 296, 334, 354, 358, 366, 454, 465, 516, 524, 540
Leusden, Jan, 51
Lévesque de Burigny, Jean, xx, 94, 95, 134–136, *157–166*, 177, 203, 220, 403, 481
Levine, G.M., 228
Lewendoski, A., 312
Libanius of Antioch, 337
Lieberwirth, R., 323
Lilienthal, Michael, 277
Lilla, V., 291
Linus (Protophilosopher), 295, 515
Lipsius, Justus (Joost Lips), 5, 35, 57, 113, 157, 193, 283, 289, 304, 320, 354, 358, 361, 408, 518, 542
Lissa, G., 13
Lister, Martin, 229
Livy (Titus Livius), 30
Locke, John, v, 78, 87, 125, 162, 178, 202, 220, 293, 360, 404, 447, 455, 481, 495, 498, 501, 514, 535, 557
Lodtmann, Karl Ger. Wilhelm, 434, 436, *469–475*
"Logique de Port Royal" ("Art de penser"), 5, 109, 121, 162, 171, 349, 425
Lojacono, E., 13, 226, 227, 268, 291
Longo, M., viii, xi, xvii, 301, 314–315, 323, 331, 337, 343, 373, 387, 393, 399, 430, 432–433, 477, 576–577
Louis XIV (King of France), 13, 47, 59, 140, 148, 177–178, 180
Loys de Bochat, Charles–Guillaume, xix
Lübbe, H., 13
Lucianus of Samosata, 7, 34, 241, 242, 283, 516
Lucina, Giuseppe, 218
Lück, H., 323
Lucretius Caro, Titus, 86, 102, 113, 255, 259, 283, 336, 443
Lucullus, Lucius Licinius, 143, 283
Ludovici, Carl Günther, *437*
Luig, K., 463
Lurbe, P., 13
Luther, Martin, 19, 45, 47, 259, 276, 302, 320, 324, 333, 336, 349, 358, 367, 383–384, 400–403, 415, 420, 424, 434, 532
Lüthje, H., 439
Lycon of Troas, 54
Lycurgus, 112, 214, 295, 515
Lyndorach (Indian philosopher), 404
Lysias, 43
Lysis, 102

M

Maber, R.G., 78
Mabillon, Jean, 13, 17, 247, 261, 276
Macary, J., 166, 177–178, 180, 197, 208–210
Macedo, Francisco, 51
Machiavelli, Niccolò, 51, 113, 366, 460, 501
Macrobius, Ambrosius Theodosius, 238, 295
Maffei, Scipione, 276, 292

Magalotti, Lorenzo, 236
Magdelaine, M., 138
Mager, I., 431
Magliabechi, Antonio, 247–249, 266
Magnen, Jean-Chrisostome, 55, 233, 236, 254
Maignan, Emmanuel, 114, 153, 272, 275
Maimonides, Moses, 143, 145, 260, 444, 517
Malbreil, G., 147
Malebranche, Nicolas de, 4, 9, 13, 61, 63, 70, 81, 85, 95, 97, 105, 119, 125, 127, 138, 149, 153–154, 178–179, 188–189, 205, 261, 284, 287, 447, 472, 495, 501
Malesherbes, Chrétien-Guillaume de Lamoignon, 180
Malfatti, Valeriano, 264
Malherbe, François de, 72
Malpighi, Marcello, 90, 229–230, 237, 240
Malusa, L., viii, 393, 429, 432, 575
Malvasia, Carlo, 230
Mancini, Alfonso, 29
Mani, 340
Manzoni, C., 226, 297
Marcadé, J., 561
Marcialis, M.T., 13, 15, 227
Marcolungo, F.L., 439
Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (Roman emperor), 74, 161, 256, 283, 286, 348, 361, 516
Mariana, Juan de, 113
Marin, B., 226
Mark (Eugenikos, Archbishop of Ephesus), St., 47
Mark the Evangelist, St., 403
Marri, F., 480
Marrone, F., 13, 278
Marsili (Marsigli), Anton Felice, x, 216, 221, *228–240*, 253, 266
Marsili, Cesare junior, 228
Marsili, Luigi Ferdinando, 228
Marsilius of Padua, 113
Marsy, François-Marie de, 134
Marti, H., 312
Martin, André, 70
Martin, François, 178
Martin, H.-J., 12
Martorana, P., 291
Masi, S., 135, 139, 356, 372
Masson, P.-M., 174, 175
Mastellone, S., 226
Mastrogiacomo, E., 177, 210, 211
Mathieu, V., xii
Mattauch, H., 12
Matteucci, G., 228
Matthew the Evangelist, St., 403
Mauclerc, Paul-Émile de, xix
Maugain, G., 226
Maupertuis, Pierre-Louis Moreau de, 179
Maurepas, Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux de, 179
Maurodinoja, Domenico, 277
Mauzi, R., 99
Maximus of Tyre, 200, 283, 341
Mazza, E., 147
Mazzola, R., 228
Mazzoni, Jacopo, 46, 243, 278, 284
Mazzucchelli, Giammaria, 217, 227
Medinacoeli, *see* Lacerda
Meibom, Marcus, 72, 546
Meinecke, F., 313
Meiners, Christoph, 574
Melanchthon, Philipp, 45, 113, 117, 133–134, 259, 284, 333, 354, 483, 501, 518
Melissus of Samos, 121, 296, 366, 465, 516, 524, 540
Ménage, Gilles, 3, 6–8, 11, 72–78, 98, 103, 106, 131–133, 149, 173, 205, 207, 218, 247, 263, 498, 546
Menander (Gnostic), 23, 340
Menar, Monsieur de, 106
Merker, N., 311, 385
Mersenne, Marin, 199, 284
Mervaud, C., 210
Meschini, F.A., 13
Methuen, Ch., 576
Metrodorus, 256
Meusel, J.G., 475
Meyer, R., 313
Michel, A., 114
Micheli, G., viii, 430, 440, 450, 575
Milton, John, 460
Minos, 515
Minunni, Antonio, 141
Minuti, R., 99
Minutoli, Vincent, 101, 116, 133
Missere Fontana, F., 223
Mochus (Moschus, Ochus), Protophilosopher, 141, 145, 255, 263, 285, 334, 521
Mohammad (Prophet), 260, 272
Mohnhaupt, H., 463
Molien, A., 61
Molière (Jean-Baptiste Poquelin), 72, 130
Möller, B., 432
Möller, H., 311
Mollerus, Johann, 437
Mollowitz, G., 556, 575
Momigliano, Ar., 13, 175, 426
Monod, A., 165

Montaigne, Michel Eyquem de, 35, 38, 78, 101, 104, 132, 146, 171, 180
Montanari, M., 228
Montesquieu, Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de La Brède et de, 543
Montfaucon, Bernard de, 247
More, Henry, 38, 354, 356, 367
More, Thomas, St., 103
Moreau, I., 15
Moreau, P.-F., 12
Moréri, Louis, 89, 108, 114, 131–133, 289
Morhof, Daniel Georg, 27, 228, 289, 309, 363, 576
Mori, G.L., 99, 138
Moriarty, M., 12
Mornaeus, Christian, 330
Moschus of Syracuse, 105
Moses, 41, 43, 60, 64–67, 70, 141, 145, 200, 205, 219, 253, 255–257, 259, 262–263, 267, 281, 285–286, 295, 327–328, 356, 365, 464, 466, 496, 521, 546, 568
Mosheim, Johann Lorenz, 349, 480, 483, 525–526
Most, G.W., 315
Mothu, A., 12, 15, 166
Motzo Dentice d'Accadia, C., 227, 291
Mouchot (abbé, curé de Poilly), 91
Moureau, F., 99
Moureaux, J.-M., 210
Mourgues, Michel, *95*, 100, 163
Moyal, G.-J.-D., 78
Muhlack, U., 314
Mühlpfordt, G., 432, 463
Mulsow, M., 303, 311, 312, 373, 377
Muratori, Ludovico Antonio, 49, 145–146, 148, 220, 222, *224–225*, 228–229, 239, 248, 264, 268, 292, 296–297, 480, 483, 559
Muret, Marc-Antoine, 131
Musaeus (Protophilosopher), 295, 319, 515
Musig, Martin, 345
Musitano, Carlo, 268–269
Mylius, Johann Christoph, 401

N

Naigeon, Jacques-André, 135, 173–175, 557–558, 574
Natali, G., 227, 278, 291, 293, 297
Naudé, Gabriel, 10, 15, 115, 132–133, 139, 157, 199, 202, 205
Neisser, L., 323
Nemesius of Emesa, 113
Neri, G.D., 576
Nero, C. Caesar Augustus Germanicus (Roman emperor), 171
Neschke, A., 576
Nestheadusa, 75
Neumeister, S., 311
Neveu, B., 12, 21
Newton, Isaac, 97, 162, 172, 177–179, 220, 278, 284, 288, 472–475, 501, 535–536, 559
Nicéron, Jean-Pierre, xxi, 16, 21, 27–28, 47, 49, 61, 69, 71, 77, 79, 87, 372
Nicholas of Damascus, 283
Nicholas V (Pope), 243
Nichols, G., 367
Nicodorus, 112
Nicole, Pierre, 14, 60, 70, 105, 162, 425
Nicolini, F., 148, 266, 277, 599, 574
Niderst, A., 15, 165
Nigidius Figulus, 283
Nigrisoli, Francesco Maria, 222
Niketas (Nicetas) Choniates, 275
Nimrod, 272
Nisbet, R., 12
Nizolio (Nizzoli), Mario, 354, 379, 455, 460
Noah, 60, 62–64, 128, 191, 193, 219, 252, 270, 272–273, 277, 281, 326–327, 333, 443
Noël, Alexandre, 295
Noel, François, 436
Nonis, P.G., 147, 228
Nordhues, P., 71
Nourrisson, J.-F., 8
Nourse, Jean, 140, 182
Novella (daughter of Giovanni D'Andrea), 103
Numa Pompilius (King of Rome), 64, 68, 102, 273, 282–283, 286, 427
Numenius of Apamea, 283, 516
Nüssel, F., 348, 373
Nuzzo, E., 227–228

O

Ockham, *see* William of Ockham
Olaso, E. de, 99
Olearius, Gottfried, 289, 308, 349, 370, 380, 393, 526, 546
Olivetti, M.M., 138
Olympiodorus, 516, 526
Omeis, Magnus Daniel, 336
Omodeo, P., 240
Oregio, Agostino, 114
Origen, 113, 118, 121, 130, 140, 142, 194, 241, 258, 282, 336–337, 361, 445, 453, 460–461, 517, 527
Origen (pseudo-), 338, 546
Orpheus, 40, 223, 252, 295, 319, 339, 500, 515
Orsi, Giovan Giuseppe, 229
Ortloff, Johann Andreas, 463, 469, 574

Osbat, L., 267
Osculati, R., 312
Osler, M.G., 240
Ovid (Ovidius Naso, Publius), 102, 113, 295, 420

P

Pace, Stefano, 221
Paganini, G., 10, 13–14, 58, 138–139, 147–148, 575
Pailhès, Cl., 138
Palladini, F., 311, 322, 463
Pallavicino, Sforza (Cardinal), 118, 251, 261
Pansa, Muzio, 159
Panthaenus of Alexandria, 242
Panzerbiter, Heinrich Nicolaus, 452
Paracelsus (Philipp Theophrastus Bombast von Hohenheim), 7, 36, 38, 202, 287, 465, 501, 518
Parente, F., 576
Parker, Samuel, 367
Parmenides of Elea, 26, 113, 121, 142, 170, 219, 252, 296, 327, 340, 354–355, 362, 366, 444–445, 453–454, 465, 472, 488, 504, 516, 519, 524, 539, 540
Parolotto, A., 77
Parrain des Coutures, Jacques, 86, 109
Pascal, Blaise, 3, 13, 70, 113–114, 153, 168, 171–172, 174, 205
Paschius, Georg, 309
Paschoud, A., 99
Patrizi, Francesco, 19, 46, 236, 239, 257–258, 275–276, 329
Paul of Tarsus, St., 256, 273, 325, 330, 403, 481
Paulsen, F., 313, 323, 431
Payne, E.F.J., 566
Pearson, John (Bishop of Chester), 73
Pelagius, 328, 358
Penn, William, 195
Peregrinus Proteus (Cynic philosopher), 516
Pereira, Gómez, 113, 244, 276, 287, 289
Pericles, 75
Peron, G.F., 227
Perrault, Charles, 261
Perrin, J.-F., 99
Pesaro (Pisaurius), Luigi, 213, 406, 553
Pesci, E., 182, 210
Petau (Petavius), Denis, 286
Peter Abelard, 19, 34, 113, 120–121, 152, 155, 258, 263, 272, 274, 283, 317, 404, 495
Peter Damian (Petrus Damiani), St., 113
Peter Lombard, 80, 252, 274, 283, 379, 383, 467, 517, 530
Peter of Abano, 34, 113, 202
Peter of Ailly, 113, 119, 329
Peter of Auriole, 113, 130
Petergrove, J.P., 575
Petersen, P., 312, 323, 331, 342, 372, 431
Petit, Pierre, 284
Petrus ab Andlo, *see* Van Mansvelt, Reinier
Peucer, Kaspar, 259
Peyrard (Pérard), Jacques, xxi
Pfaff, Christoph Matthäus, 480
Phaedo of Elis, 465
Phaedrus, 337
Pherecydes of Syros, 64, 102, 142, 256, 472, 515
Philip II (King of Macedon), 537
Philipp, W., 310, 393
Philo of Alexandria (Philo Judaeus), 144, 243, 262, 283
Philochorus of Athens, 74
Philodemus of Gadara, 283
Philoxenus (Physician), 43
Phocion of Athens, 161
Piaia, G., viii, xi, xvii, 3, 14, 49, 88, 93, 100, 139, 157, 175, 177, 210, 213, 227, 229–230, 232, 238–239, 297, 432, 575, 577
Piattelli, D., 576
Picavet, F., 136–138, 575
Piccart, Michael, 518
Piccinardi, Serafino, 276
Piccolomini, Alessandro, 113
Piccolomini, Francesco, 113, 275, 354, 518
Pichler, H., 439
Pico della Mirandola, Giovan Francesco, 46, 146–147, 168, 172, 286, 349
Pico della Mirandola, Giovanni, 44, 172, 244, 257, 260, 304, 333, 354, 356
Pighius (Pigge), Albertus, 19
Pimpinella, P., 439
Pindar, 43, 295
Pintard, R., 12
Pisirrhonde, *see* Bisorronde (Pisirrhonde) of Tarentum
Piso, Marcus, 283
Pitassi, M.-C., 87, 138
Piva, F., 210
Plato, 3–4, 9, 11, 17, 23–26, 30, 32–33, 35, 40–46, 49, 51, 55–57, 61, 64–69, 70, 75, 84–85, 89–90, 96, 101, 103, 105, 113–115, 118, 142–146, 149–150, 160–161, 164, 170, 172–173, 188, 197–201, 208, 214–215, 219–220, 223–224, 233–235, 237, 239, 242–243, 251–252, 256–258, 261, 263, 266, 271, 275, 281, 285–286,

295–296, 304, 307–308, 314, 320–321, 324–331, 334–336, 339–341, 346, 357–358, 362, 379, 383, 409, 417–418, 420, 423, 438, 444–445, 447, 453, 456, 461–462, 464, 466, 472–473, 481, 488, 495–499, 503–508, 523, 525–527, 529, 533, 537, 539, 544, 546–548, 553, 572
Plautus, Titus Maccius, 78
Pletho, Georgius Gemistus, 243
Pliny the Elder, 164, 198, 295, 516
Pliny the Younger, 251
Plotinus, 66, 69, 95, 103, 118, 121, 135, 200, 272, 281, 283, 333, 341, 357, 361–362, 427, 443, 445, 453, 458, 461, 465, 473, 496, 501, 506, 516, 538–539, 547
Pluche, Noël (Antoine), *97*, 100
Plutarch of Chaeronea, 5, 31, 35, 39, 68, 75–76, 110, 132–133, 150, 152–155, 169, 199, 233, 238, 243, 254, 283, 292, 295, 330, 341, 403, 443, 468, 483, 496, 526, 544–546
Poiret, Pierre, 97, 138, 316, 460, 495
Politi, Alessandro, 292
Poliziano, Angelo, 54, 172, 244, 283
Pollianus, L. Flavius, 75
Pölnitz, G.F. von, 573
Polybius, 168, 188, 224
Polygnotus, 234
Pombal, Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, marquis of, 291, 561
Pomian, K., 13
Pompa, L., 223
Pompadour, Jeanne-Antoinette Poisson, marquise de, 179
Pomponazzi, Pietro, 35, 44, 113, 172, 358, 366, 404, 501, 518
Pomponius Atticus, 283
Pomponius Mela, 145
Pons, A., 228
Popkin, R.H., 12, 14, 49, 99, 107, 138, 147, 482, 576
Porphyry, 66, 135, 143–144, 281, 283, 443, 445, 458, 461, 506, 526, 530
Porzio, Lucantonio, 248, 267
Porzio, Simone, 259
Possevino, Antonio, 261
Postel, Guillaume, 7, 45, 47, 259, 518
Potamon of Alexandria, 33, 54–55, 192, 233, 282, 333, 404, 453, 460, 466, 500, 537
Pott, M., 311
Pourchot, Edmond, x, 6, 9, 11, *88–91*, 276
Prantl, K., 377
Preti, C., 277
Prévost, Antoine-François, 99, 175
Proclus, 200, 341, 361, 461, 465, 506, 516, 526
Procopius of Gaza, 458
Prost, G., 58
Protagoras of Abdera, 113, 143, 524, 540
Proust, J., 139, 210, 494, 558, 571, 575–576
Psellus, Michael, 193, 243, 283
Ptolemy (Claudius Ptolemaeus), 295
Ptolemy II Philadelphus (King of Egypt), 295
Publilius Syrus, 76
Pufendorf, Samuel, 346, 360, 399, 447, 453, 457, 460, 472, 501, 535
Pulleyn, Octavian, 72, 74
Pupi, A., 48–49
Pyrrho of Elis, 64, 97, 136, 140, 143, 170–171, 190, 224, 234, 242, 426, 444, 460, 472, 481
Pythagoras of Samos, 10–11, 24, 34–35, 40–41, 54–57, 64, 67–68, 75, 82, 84–85, 90, 102, 113, 142–143, 145–146, 161, 173, 188, 190, 192, 197, 199, 214, 218–219, 223, 234, 242, 252–253, 257–258, 263, 273–274, 277, 285–286, 289, 290, 294–296, 321, 325–327, 329, 331, 333, 339, 357, 376, 408, 427, 444, 453, 456, 460, 462, 464–465, 472–473, 488, 500, 504, 512, 515–516, 522, 539–540, 546

Q

Quantin, J.-L., 21
Quérard, J.-M., 11
Quevedo y Villegas, Francisco de, 254
Quinot, abbé, 149
Quinzano, Giovanni Francesco, 240

R

Rabutin Bussy, R. de, 49
Rachel, 413
Racine, Jean, 72, 130
Ragghianti, R., 166, 246
Raimondi, E., 228, 240
Rak, M., xxii, 14, 49, 116, 139, 210, 226, 234, 248–249, 251–253, 257, 263, 266–268, 291, 314, 393
Ramsay, André-Michel de, 149, 151
Ramus, Petrus (Pierre de la Ramée), 17–18, 20, 46, 55, 113, 258, 284, 319–320, 333, 335, 376, 379, 423, 455, 460, 501
Rapetti, E., 29, 49, 147
Rapin, René, x, 6–11, 25, *29–50*, 70, 79, 81, 83, 85–87, 93–94, 103, 105, 116, 133–134, 172–173, 200, 202, 205, 207, 259, 263, 276, 289
Ravier, E., 344
Ray, John, 367

Raynaud, Théophile, 130
Rechenberg, L.A., 426
Redi, Francesco, 229, 237
Régis, Pierre-Syilvain, 9, 70, 79, 81, 85–87, 91, 140, 181, 406, 553
Reill, P.H., 313
Reimmann, Jakob Friedrich, xi, 162, 309, 331, 347, 370, *373–377*
Reinhard, Lorenz, 290, 302, 371, 434, *450–457*, 511
Reinhold, Karl Leonhard, xi
Renaudot, Eusèbe, 76, 436
Rétat, P., 134–136, 138, 165, 174–175
Reuchlin, Johann, 34, 36
Reulos, M., 21
Reventlow, H.G., 432
Rex, W., 138
Rhabanus Maurus, 20, 283, 329
Ribard, D., 14
Ricci, S., 210, 432, 576
Ricken, U., 99
Ricuperati, G., 218–219, 226–227, 291
Rietstap, J.B., 469
Ritschl, A., 312, 323, 372
Robert, Ph. De, 138
Robertson, J., 226
Robinet, A., 138
Rochot, B., 240
Rodis-Lewis, G., 4, 147
Roël(l), Hermann Alexander, 399
Roger Bacon, 113, 202, 359, 455, 473
Roger of Hereford, 284
Roger, A., 99
Roger, Ph., 99
Rohault, Jacques, 81, 114, 181
Rollin, Charles, *98–100*
Romano, A., 226
Rorario, Girolamo, 113
Roricon, 166
Rosa, M., 226
Roscelin (Roscellinus) of Compiègne, 258, 274, 383, 455, 495, 548, 561
Rosenroth, Knorr of, 356
Rossi (Rossi Monti), Paolo, xii, 228
Rossi, Pietro, xii
Rossi Ercolani, R., 297
Rotermund, Heinrich Wilhelm, xx, 437
Rotrou, 149
Rougemont, François de, 355
Roukhomovsky, B., 210
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 174–175, 209
Ruchat, Abraham, xix
Rüdiger, Andreas, 302, 315, 345, 360, 451, 455
Rudolph, O.P., 54, 113, 172, 283, 434
Ruesen, J., 314
Rumbold, M.E., 88
Ruocco, G., 15
Ruth, P., 311
Ryan, T., 138
Ryssel, Johann Jakob von, 308

S

Sabatier de Castres, Antoine, 207, 210
Saccaro Battisti, G., 576
Sagittarius (Schütze), Kaspar, 343
Sailor, D.B., 267
Sainjore, *see* Simon, Richard
Saint-Hyacinthe, Thémiseul de, xx, 157–158
Sainte-Marthe, Abel Louis de, 59
Saintes, Bishof of, *see* Beaumont, Léon
Salaün, F., 177, 180, 209
Salazar, Ph.-J., 15
Salem, J., 13
Sallengre, Albert-Henri, xx
Sallo, Denis de, xx, 118
Salonina, Julia Cornelia (wife of Roman emperor Gallienus), 103
Samfiresco, A., 76–77
Sánchez, Francisco, 501, 518
Santinello, G., v, viii, xxii, 210, 314, 486, 569, 576
Sarah, 413
Sardanapalus (King of Assyria), 109
Sarpi, Paolo, 45, 86, 118, 258
Saturninus of Antioch (Gnostic), 340
Saurin, Élie, 129
Savérien, Alexandre, 135, 157
Savonarola, Girolamo, 54, 283
Savorelli, A., 297
Scaligero, Giulio Cesare, 55
Scaramuzza, G., 576
Schallenberg, Christoph Otto von, 494
Schatz, Johann Jakob, 345
Schellenberger, P., 311
Schenk, G., 313
Schiavone, M., 96, 99, 121, 139
Schmersahl, Elias Friedrich, xxi, 322–323, 331, 372, 385, 398–399, 431, 438, 450, 457, 463, 574
Schmidt, W., 322
Schmidt-Biggemann, W., 71, 312, 314, 573, 575, 577
Schmitt, C., 385
Schmitt, Ch.B., 14, 71
Schneewind, J.B., 100, 315
Schneider, U.J., 311–313, 432

Schneiders, W., 302, 311, 312, 322, 373, 398, 432
Schöne, A., 313
Schopenhauer, A., 566
Schoppe (Scioppius), Kaspar, 354
Schøsler, J., 88, 99
Schrader, W., 313
Schröder, P., 311, 458
Schröder, W., 311
Schröpfer, H., 314
Schubert, Johann Ernst, *438–439*, 573
Schwabe, Johann Joachim, 437
Schwarzbach, B.E., 165
Sciacca, G.M., 147
Scotus Eriugena, *see* Johannes Scotus Eriugena
Scribano, E., 15
Scudéry, Madeleine de, 77, 106
Seifert, A., 314
Selden, John, 501
Sem, 65
Senarchus of Seleucia, 283
Seneca, L. Annaeus, 10, 56–57, 86, 132, 144, 152, 155, 161, 183, 233, 237, 242, 254, 256, 261, 272–273, 283, 286, 295, 361, 443, 445, 448, 516, 542
Sennert, Daniel, 55, 446
Septimius Severus, Lucius (Roman emperor), 76
Sergius of Rēsh῾āina, 260
Serrapica, S., 267
Serres (Serranus), Jean de, 328
Servet, Miguel, 259
Seth, 65, 319, 333, 512, 515
Seuterus, Mattäus, 556
Seven Sages (Wise Men) of Greece, 143, 150, 281, 295, 334, 347, 404, 410, 417, 443, 453, 465, 471, 500, 515
Sextius, Quintus, 516
Sextus Empiricus, 53, 97, 101, 136, 143–145, 233, 283, 516, 545
Sextus of Cheronea, 144, 283
Sgard, J., 12, 99
Shackleton, R., 88
Shaftesbury, Antony Ashley Cooper junior, 78, 247
Siddons, H., vi
Silvestre, Peter, 264
Simon Magus, 258, 272, 328, 340
Simon of Tournai, 258
Simon, Richard (pseudonym: de Sainjore), xix, 95, 200, 205
Simone, F., 139
Simonius, Simon, 518
Simplicius, 23, 251, 458, 516
Simson, F.H., 575
Sina, M., 13, 58, 88
Sinnhold, Johann Nicolaus, 387, 390–391
Sirach, 415
Smith, Adam, 543
Smith, D.W., 210
Socrates, 10, 25, 33, 35, 40, 41, 53, 57, 65–67, 80, 84–85, 89–90, 98, 102, 113–114, 123, 129, 143–146, 149, 164, 170, 173, 190, 192, 198–200, 214, 216, 223–224, 234, 242, 273, 281, 285–286, 294, 296, 309, 321, 334, 354–355, 357, 404, 411–412, 417–418, 422, 443, 444–445, 453, 455, 460, 462, 465, 472, 488, 504–505, 507–508, 516, 522, 525, 542, 546
Solé, M., 138
Solomon, 40, 62, 64, 170, 204–205, 281, 285, 365, 542, 546
Solon, 112, 150, 214, 224, 295, 347, 500, 515
Sommer, A.U., 312, 314
Sommervogel, C., xxii, 20, 29, 227
Sopater of Apamea, 74
Sophocles, 43, 129
Soranus, Quintus Valerius, 121
Sotion of Alexandria, 34, 516
Souverain, Matthieu, 96
Spallanzani, M.F., 13
Sparn, W., 345, 373
Spener, Philipp, 323, 343
Speusippus, 89, 113
Spink, J.S., xxiii, 12, 14–15, 28, 49, 89, 91, 100, 147, 165
Spinoza, Baruch de, 52, 55, 113–114, 118–122, 124, 127–128, 135, 141, 161–162, 164, 199, 220, 259, 260, 262, 284, 286–287, 338, 347, 360, 362, 365–368, 405, 461, 472, 474, 501, 507, 524, 535–536
St. Amand, James, 264
Stabile, G., 240
Stahl, Georg Ernst, 347
Stammen, Th., 312, 573, 575, 577
Stanley, Thomas, ix, xi, 3, 5, 48, 86–87, 98, 133, 136, 163, 173, 205, 207, 215, 218, 222, 279, 290, 294, 308, 330, 363, 370, 380, 388–389, 397, 406, 409, 428, 448, 507, 511, 519, 546, 553, 557, 563, 566
Steffens, A., 312
Stenger, G., 209
Stephanus, Henricus, *see* Estienne, Henri
Steuco, Agostino, 61, 95–96, 159–160, 261, 276
Stewart, Ph., 99

Stile, A., 13
Stillingfleet, Edward (Bishop of Worcester), 125, 330
Stolle, Gottlieb, xxi, *309–310*, 323, 336, 342, 373, 377, 398–399, 406, 420, 430–432, 449–451
Stolzenberg, J., 440
Stolzenburg, A.F., 372–373
Stone, H.S., 226
Strabo, 144, 194, 283, 515
Strato of Lampsacus, 120, 125, 127, 161, 199, 481
Stricker, N., 138
Struever, N., 267
Struve, Burkhard Gotthelf, xx, xxi, 88, 309–*310*, 331, 347, 363, 373, 385, 392, 399, 426, 432, 436–437, 450, 456, 463, 469
Stryckius, Johann Samuel, 457
Sturm, Johann Christoph, 28, 189, 284, 304, 518
Suárez, Francisco, 38
Suda (Suida), 74, 145, 245
Sulpizio, F.A., 278
Suppa, S., 226
Swedenborg, Immanuel von, 482
Synesius of Cyrene (Bishop of Ptolomais), 283, 495, 527
Syrbius, Johann Jakob, xi, 372, *378–380*, 383, 455, 480, 498, 523
Syrianus, 286

T

Tacitus, Publius Cornelius, 261, 346
Tafuri, Giov. Bernardino, *218*, 290
Talon, Omer, 20
Tannery, P., 3
Tartarotti, Girolamo, 248, 264–265, 268
Tassoni, Alessandro, 276
Tatianus, 283
Taussig, S., 13
Telesio, Bernardino, 274–276, 284, 423, 518
Teller, Romanus, 484
Tennemann, Wilhelm Gottlieb, xxiii, 135, 138, 151, 165–166, 290, 479, 539, 563–565, 569, 574, 576
Teyssandier, B., 13
Thales of Miletus, 11, 24, 26, 33–34, 40, 64, 67, 84, 90, 102, 120–121, 136, 150, 161, 164, 190, 197, 199, 216, 219, 224, 242, 256, 273, 281, 285, 294–295, 314, 326, 334, 340, 354–355, 357, 408, 418, 443–444, 453, 465–466, 469, 471–472, 508, 512, 515, 522, 538, 541, 544–545, 547
Theano (wife of Pythagoras), 75
Themisten, 75
Themistius, 39, 85, 283, 465, 516, 526
Theocritus, 29
Theodatus (King of the Ostrogoths), 243, 283
Theodoret (Bishop of Cyrrhus), 160
Theodosius II the Younger (Roman emperor), 75
Theophilus (Bishop of Antioch), St., 23, 337
Theophrastus of Eres, 10, 15, 43, 78, 404, 546
Theophylact Simocatta, 250
Tholuck, F.A.G., 312, 323
Thomann, M., 439
Thomas the Apostle, St., 290
Thomas Aquinas, St., 19, 34–35, 44, 55, 59, 80, 113, 152, 154–155, 236, 242, 244, 256, 261, 272, 274, 295, 359, 454, 467, 495, 530–531, 557, 561
Thomas, J., 28
Thomasius, Christian, ix, x, xx, xxi, 131, 133, 136, 284, 305–309, 311–313, *315–323*, 332, 339, 341
Thomasius, Jakob, x, xi, 301–303
Thomassin, Louis, x, 5–9, *59–71*, 93, 95, 105, 128–129, 133, 203, 205
Thucydides, 30
Thümmig, Ludwig Philipp, 360
Tiedemann, Dietrich, 137, 563, 565, 569, 574
Tigerstedt, E.N., 49, 314
Timaeus of Locri, 256, 294, 504
Timmermans, B., 14
Timoleon, 161
Timon of Phlius, 143
Tiphis, 238
Tiraboschi, Girolamo, 277, 292–293, 297
Tiraqueau, André, 76
Titelmans, François, 257
Titone, V., 226, 277–278
Toland, John, 202, 365, 367, 413
Tolmer, L., 147
Tolomio, I., viii, 227, 239, 268, 278, 297, 575
Tomasoni, F., 323
Tonelli, G., 99, 482
Torricelli, Evangelista, 460
Torrini, M., 222, 226, 240, 267
Trajan (Marcus Ulpius Nerva Traianus, Roman emperor), 190, 237
Trapezuntius, Georgius, 46–47, 283, 289, 304, 517
Tremigliozzi, Gaetano, 268
Treuner, Philipp, 393, 399
Tribbechow, Adam, 303, 308, 335, 354, 369, 403, 414, 517, 529

Trismegistus, *see* Hermes (Mercurius) Trismegistus
Trithemius (Thritemius), Johannes, 243–244, 258
Tschackert, P., 380, 385
Tschirnhaus, Ehrenfried Walther von, 316, 360
Tufts, J.H., 566, 575
Tulelli, P.E., 291
Turricchia, R., 228

U
Ueberweg, F., 575
Urban VIII (Pope), 114

V
Valjavec, F., 99, 310, 435
Valla, Lorenzo, 54, 113, 193, 284, 335, 354, 376, 379, 434, 455, 460
Valletta, Giuseppe, viii, x, 48, 145, 216–219, 221–222, 225, 245, *246–268*, 273, 278, 279, 285–287
Valletta, Nicolò Saverio, 264
Vallisneri, Antonio, 229, 264, 277
Valois (Valesius), Henri de, 76
Valsecchi, Antonino, 371, 373
Van Dale, Anton, 399
Van Damme, S., 13
Van Decker, Jeremias, 332
Van der Zande, J., 576
Van Effen, Juste, xx
Van Helmont, Franciscus Mercurius, 38
Van Helmont, Z.B., 333
Van Lieshout, H.H.M., 138
Van Mansvelt, Reinier, 114
Van Musschenbroek, Peter, 215, 559
Vanderjagt, A., 12, 576
Vanini, Giulio Cesare, 257, 259, 366, 501
Varani, G., 139, 315, 323, 373
Varro, Marcus Terentius, 10, 39, 72, 85, 143, 250, 283, 462
Vasina, A., 228
Vasoli, C., 270, 278
Vaz, F.A.L., 561
Velez, *see* Faxardo
Velleius, Gaius (Epicurean philosopher), 283
Venturi, F., 226, 297
Verhulst, S., 14
Vernassa, Matteo, 246
Vernia, Nicoletto, 259
Vernière, P., 12, 135, 139, 147, 165, 210, 575
Vespucci, Amerigo, 423
Vialard, A., 28
Vico, Giambattista, ix, 145, 148, 218, *222–224*, 225, 247, 265, 268–269, 277, 385, 559
Victor Amadeus II (Duque of Savoy, later King of Sardinia), 247
Vierhaus, R., 313
Villani, A., 322
Villemandy, Pierre de, x, 6, 8–9, 11, 28, *50–58*, 85, 91, 94, 104–105, 112, 114, 296, 417, 466
Vincent of Beauvais, 467
Virgil (Publius Vergilius Maro), 6, 30, 43, 256, 283, 286, 295
Vitriarius, Philipp Reinhard, 346
Vitringa, Campegius, the Elder, 399
Vives, Juan Luis, 54–55, 57, 59, 157, 200, 244, 318, 354, 553
Voetius (Voët), Gijsbert, 335
Volbehr, F., 450
Völkel, M., 314
Vollhardt, F., 322
Voss, J., 314
Vossius, Gerhard Johann, 3, 5, 14, 55, 58, 69, 75–76, 101, 105, 133, 205, 217–218, 237, 244, 263–276, 284, 289, 294–295, 308, 326–327, 330, 333, 336, 339, 354, 361, 389, 397, 406, 409, 423, 428, 473, 519, 553
Vossius, Isaak, 237
Vyverberg, H., 99

W
Wachterus, Johann Georg, 348
Wade, I.O., 98, 165
Waithe, M.E., 78
Walch, Johann Georg, xi, 222, 225, 343, 346, 353, 361, 371–372, 377, 379, *380–385*, 438, 457, 483, 555, 574
Walker, D.P., 71
Wallmann, J., 312
Waquet, F., 226
Waquet, J.-C., 21
Wardemann, P., 463
Warens, Françoise-Louise de La Tour de, 174
Watson, R.A., 14
Weibel, L., 138
Weigel, Valentin, 501
Weissenborn, Isaiah Friedrich, 450
Wellenreuther, H., 313
Weller, Ph., v, xxii
Wessel Gansfort, Johannes, 54
Westermann, Peter, 333
Weston, G., vi
Wetzel, K., 314
Whelan, R., 138
Wickelgren, F.L., 15
Wiedemann, Samuel, 480

Wight, O.W., 575
Wilke, J., 313
Wilkin, W., 148
Wille, D. von, 311, 385
William of Champeaux, 121
William of Ockham, 244
Willis, Thomas, 258
Wilson, A.M., 575
Wimmer, F.M., 432, 576
Windelband, W., 566, 575
Windet, Jakob, 73
Windheim, Christian Ernst von, *438*
Witter, Johann Jakob, 391
Wolf, Johann Christoph, 162, 199, 306, *337–343*, 449, 451, 506, 547
Wolff, Christian, x, 222, 301–303, 305–306, 312, 315, 327, 344–345, 355, 360, 362, 370–371, 373, 378, 411, 433–434, *435–437*, 439, 440, 446, 451, 455, 472, 474–475, 480, 486–487, 513, 518, 523, 535, 564, 566, 571–572
Wolff, H.M., 301, 311, 322, 372
Wollgast, S., 311, 385
Wundt, M., xxiii, 302, 311, 322, 344–345, 372, 385, 431, 450, 571–572, 576
Wuttke, H., 372

X
Xantippe, 404
Xeniades of Corinth, 142
Xenocrates of Chalcedon, 257
Xenophanes of Colophon, 113, 115, 121, 123–124, 127, 142, 199, 252, 286, 296, 340, 354–355, 366, 453–454, 465, 472, 524
Xenophon of Athens, 98, 161, 522
Xylander (Holtzman), Wilhelm, 546

Y
Yolton, J., 99

Z
Zabanius, Isaac, 257
Zabarella, Jacopo, 113, 275, 333, 354, 518
Zaccone Sina, M.G., 88, 91
Zäh, H., 574
Zaleucus of Locri, 515
Zambelli, P., 139, 169, 210, 226, 267, 291, 385, 435, 559
Zarka, Y.-Ch., 14
Zedelmaier, H., 313–315, 377, 432
Zedler, B.H., 77, 78
Zelle, C., 313, 438
Zempliner, A., 440
Zeno of Citium, 17, 35, 64–66, 85, 143, 150, 199, 234, 244, 285, 334–335, 366, 379, 472–473, 524, 539, 542, 548
Zeno of Elea, 42, 105, 113, 115, 123, 142–143, 168, 174, 252, 274, 354, 366, 445, 454, 465, 504, 516, 519, 540
Zeno, Apostolo, xx, 247, 267
Zeno, Pier Caterino, xx, 276
Zierold, Johann Wilhelm, 306–307, *323–331*, 342, 413, 415–416, 445, 449, 554, 571
Zoli, S., 12
Zoroaster, 7, 40, 133, 170, 223, 272, 295, 327, 546
Zurbucken, S., 322

Index of "Nations", Philosophical Schools and Sects

A

Academics, Academy (Platonic), 9–10, 33, 53–54, 66, 69, 74, 80, 89, 101–102, 117, 142–144, 146, 171, 186, 214, 281, 283, 293, 309, 320–321, 339, 354, 361–362, 423, 443, 448, 453, 461, 466, 468, 472, 474, 500, 516, 522, 525, 527
See also Sceptics, Skepticism

Albertists, 54, 283

Antediluvian philosophy, 193, 374, 503, 512, 514, 557

Arabs, Arabic philosophy, 7, 33–34, 44, 54, 89, 113, 142–143, 154, 190, 193, 204, 217, 220, 222, 238, 242, 252, 256, 260, 270, 275, 283, 286, 319, 354, 359, 443, 446, 453–454, 461, 500–501, 512, 515, 517, 528, 531, 538, 557

Aristotelians, Aristotelianism, vii, x, 8–9, 17–20, 31, 35, 40, 44–46, 49, 51–52, 54–58, 66, 70, 80, 101, 103, 113, 125–126, 171, 193, 220–221, 236, 243, 249–253, 255, 258–262, 264–265, 272, 281, 283, 293, 295, 301, 304, 307–308, 315, 317–319, 324, 328–330, 333–334, 347, 354, 358–359, 364–366, 391, 408, 413, 417, 420, 443, 445–446, 454, 461, 466–467, 477, 497, 501, 503, 513, 516–518, 523, 526, 528, 530–532, 537, 542, 551, 557
See also Peripatetics, Peripatetism

"Aristotelici puri", 423

Assyrians, 64, 218, 326

Atomists, Atomistic philosophy, vii, 23, 43, 95, 105, 120, 219, 221, 240, 248, 251–257, 262, 266–267, 272, 274–275, 333–334, 339–340, 354, 366, 422, 453–454, 458, 467, 472, 516, 519, 524–525, 539–540, 546, 552
See also Corpuscolar philosophy

Averroists, Averroism, 33, 530

B

Barbarians, Barbarian philosophy, 6, 62, 64–65, 68, 191, 193–195, 203, 223, 232–233, 242–243, 250, 260, 272, 279, 281–282, 284–285, 290, 309, 319, 333–334, 339, 353–354, 357, 362, 364–365, 383, 391, 404–405, 412, 414–415, 438, 443, 452–453, 460, 471–472, 502–503, 512, 514–515, 519–521, 528, 547–548, 568

Brahmins (Brahmans, "Brachmanes"), 118, 141, 143, 164, 219, 256, 281

Britons ("Britanni"), 515, 546

C

Cabbalistic sect, 36, 173, 284, 347–348, 356, 444, 518

Cambridge Platonists, 256, 356
See also English Platonists

Cartesians, Cartesianism, x, 4–6, 8–9, 14, 26, 31, 42, 51–52, 57, 81–83, 87–90, 93, 106, 111, 119–120, 123, 125–126, 140, 145–147, 155, 168, 171–172, 181, 188, 219–220, 223, 226, 239, 259, 275, 280, 283, 287–288, 290, 294, 317, 408, 413, 420, 458, 495, 534, 540, 553

Celts, 191, 353, 500

Chald(a)eans, 56, 64, 85–86, 191, 206, 252, 257, 272, 281, 309, 326, 333–334, 353, 365, 419, 443–444, 500, 515, 520–521, 557

Chinese, 54, 90, 118, 120, 161, 163–164, 191, 204, 207, 281, 285, 290, 309, 353, 355, 435–436, 443, 471–472, 501, 503, 513, 518, 557

Church Fathers, 247, 258, 304, 307, 319, 325–328, 330, 337, 350, 362–363, 369, 410, 426–427, 442, 453–454, 466, 478, 496, 501, 504, 507, 519, 525, 527, 542, 546
See also Patristics
"Chymici" (Chemists), 24, 27–28, 55, 235, 283–284, 289, 446, 465, 468
Conceptualists, 530
"Conimbricenses", 54
Corpuscolar philosophy, 106, 249, 258
Cynics, 33, 54, 65, 74, 242, 283, 294, 321, 326, 354, 406, 423, 443, 453, 466, 468, 495, 500, 516
Cyrenaics, 54, 66, 74, 294, 354, 423, 443, 453, 500, 516

D
Donatists, 258
Druids, 53, 57, 256, 273, 290, 333, 353

E
Eclectics, Eclecticism (ancient/modern), x, 8–9, 11, 17, 23, 27, 33, 50, 52, 54–58, 61, 80, 85, 102, 114, 142, 169, 171, 192, 204, 242, 280–284, 289–291, 293–294, 296, 301–385, 388–389, 392, 396–398, 407–408, 412–413, 420, 422–423, 427, 429–430, 434, 435, 442, 452–453, 455–456, 459–460, 462, 465–466, 473, 477–479, 486, 492–494, 500–501, 503, 512–513, 515–519, 525, 527, 533–534, 537, 539, 547–549, 551, 554, 557–559, 562, 567–568, 571–573
Egyptians, 22, 34–35, 43, 57, 64, 68, 90, 141, 170, 191, 219, 233, 238, 252, 257, 281, 309, 326–327, 333, 353, 357, 376, 404, 416, 443, 464, 466, 472, 500, 504, 515, 525, 539
Eleatics, 54, 115, 123, 171, 190, 192, 232, 242, 283, 294–295, 326, 339–340, 347, 354, 355, 362, 365–367, 422, 443–444, 453–454, 460, 465, 467, 500, 516, 519, 524, 539–540, 557
Elis, school of, 354, 423, 453, 500, 516
Elpistics, 483
English Platonists, 259, 266, 504
Epicureans, Epicureanism, 8, 35, 43–44, 51–52, 54–57, 65, 74, 80, 89, 101, 109, 126, 168, 193, 207, 216, 219, 251, 259, 264, 281–283, 285, 294–295, 309, 326, 333–334, 336, 354, 358–359, 362, 364, 366, 406, 426, 443–444, 465–468, 472, 495, 500, 516–518, 524–525, 557
Eretrians, Eretriachic school, 242
Essenes, 143, 253, 281, 517
Ethiopians, 191, 281, 326, 333, 515
"Exotica, philosophia", 501, 513
Experimental philosophy, 24, 181, 203, 218, 232, 235, 239, 264, 269, 272, 275, 460

F
Formalists, 530

G
Gauls, 281, 309, 515
Gassendists, Gassendians, 25, 90, 168, 221, 268, 272, 274, 284, 288
See also Atomists, Atomistic philosophy
Germans, 178, 222, 281, 309, 325, 374, 414, 455, 515
"Getae", 515
Gymnosophists, 56, 64, 143, 281, 444

H
Hebrews, Hebrew philosophy, *see* Jewish people and philosophy
Heraclitans, 488, 500, 504, 516
Hobbesian sect, 51, 288
"Hylobii," *see* Germans

I
Indians, 57, 191, 233, 281, 309, 333, 353, 443, 500, 515
Indians of America (Canadians), 194, 501, 513
Indo-Chinese, 501, 513
Ionic school, 53, 80, 89, 128, 319, 326, 333–334, 339–340, 354–355, 357, 404, 417, 422, 443–444, 453, 460, 465–466, 468, 472, 500, 508, 515–516, 522, 544, 557
Italic school, 53–54, 80, 89, 171, 192, 218, 221, 232, 242, 251–253, 255, 272–273, 281–282, 286, 294–295, 319, 326, 333, 339, 422–423, 444, 460, 465–466, 500, 510, 515–516, 519, 522, 539

J
Japanese, 161, 260, 501, 513
Jewish people and philosophy, 22, 40–41, 57, 60, 62, 64, 70, 143, 170, 192, 194–195, 206, 242, 252, 256, 272–273, 281–282, 285, 290, 295, 319, 325–326, 334, 339, 347–348, 353, 355–357, 364–365, 371, 376, 415–417, 422–423, 443–444, 453, 464, 500–501, 504, 512, 514–516, 517, 527–528, 546

M
Magi, 56, 143, 516
"Magnetic" philosophy, 233, 236–237, 276
Manich(a)eans, Manich(a)eism, 35, 96, 134–136, 162, 195, 206, 258, 260, 306, 317, 337–342, 367, 506, 547
Megarians, 66, 74, 354, 453, 516
Moors, 233, 244, 500
Mosaicists, Mosaic philosophy, 41, 141, 235, 238, 256–257, 284, 304, 328, 339, 347, 501, 504, 518
"Mythica" philosophy, 281
See also Poetic philosophy ("Philosophia fabulosa")

N
Neoplatonists, Neoplatonism, 25, 75, 84, 96, 242, 255, 282, 304, 341, 343, 357, 426, 445, 460, 473–474, 490, 496–497, 499–500, 505–507, 512, 517, 519, 525–527, 529, 537–538, 547–548, 571
Newtonianism, Newtonian school, 172, 288
Nimrodians, 319
Nominalists, Nominalism, 35, 54, 80, 90, 171, 193, 252, 441, 454–455, 495, 498, 530, 548
"Novatores", 354, 359, 446, 461

O
Ockhamists, 283, 530

P
Patristics, 17, 84, 94, 239, 256, 307, 461, 495, 497, 512, 514, 517, 527–528, 538, 547, 571
See also Church Fathers
Peripatetics, Peripatetism, 4, 10, 25–26, 37, 50, 53–55, 66, 74, 80, 84, 89, 104–105, 114, 122, 168, 214, 221, 230, 232, 236, 238, 242–244, 248–251, 253–255, 257–261, 263–264, 275, 281, 283–284, 289, 293–294, 309, 317, 333, 339, 354, 404, 420, 423, 443, 445, 453, 461, 465–468, 500, 516, 523, 537, 557
See also Aristotelians, Aristotelianism
Persians, 57, 101, 206, 233, 252, 283, 326–327, 353, 500
Pharisees, 57, 281, 517
Phoenicians, 57, 64–65, 68, 191, 252, 256, 281, 333–334, 353, 500, 515
"Platonici recentiores", 461
Platonists, Platonism, x, 5, 8, 25, 27, 31, 36, 40, 43–44, 46–47, 66, 69–70, 74, 80, 85, 95–97, 103, 125–126, 170, 173, 200, 219–220, 242–243, 257–258, 263, 266, 283–284, 307, 320, 324, 328–330, 333–334, 340, 347, 354, 357–358, 361–363, 365, 371, 406, 413, 420, 423, 445, 448, 453, 461, 466–467, 474, 496, 503–505, 507, 519, 522, 526–528, 539, 556–557, 572
Poetic philosophy ("Philosophia fabulosa"), 11, 326
Pythagoreans, Pythagorism, 25, 33, 36–37, 74–76, 95, 101–102, 164, 218–219, 242, 252–253, 272, 275, 281, 283–284, 294, 309, 327, 353–354, 406, 420, 423, 443–444, 452, 466, 503–505, 510, 516–518, 524–525, 537, 539–540, 557

R
Ramists, 55
Recabites, 281
Romans, Roman philosophy, 7, 31, 54, 68, 192, 217, 242, 252, 256, 260, 272–273, 280, 282–283, 285–286, 289, 309, 320, 325, 327, 353–355, 364, 423, 443, 445, 452, 454, 461, 465, 473, 495, 500, 502, 512, 515–516, 519, 525

S
Sab(a)eans, 281, 353, 365
Sadducees, 57, 281, 517
Sceptics, Scepticism, 5, 9–10, 22, 33, 44, 51–54, 56, 66, 69, 80, 85, 97, 101, 106, 111, 116–117, 122–123, 135–136, 140–147, 168, 170, 173, 180, 208, 216, 219, 224, 242, 282, 481, 492, 495, 500–501, 515–516, 518, 568
See also Academics, Academy (Platonic)
"Scholastici juniores", 423
Scholasticism, Scholastic philosophy, vii, x, 7, 19, 26, 33–36, 45–46, 51, 54, 56, 58, 80–81, 85, 89–90, 113, 143, 153, 155, 160, 171, 190, 193, 201, 214–218, 231, 236, 239, 241–244, 250–252, 260–261, 272–274, 276, 283–284, 286, 301, 304–305, 307–308, 318–321, 326, 328–329, 333, 335, 341, 353–355, 357, 359–360, 362, 376, 379, 383–384, 391, 397, 402–405, 412, 414–415, 419–420, 423, 428–429, 434, 443, 445–447, 453–454, 458, 461, 465, 467–469, 473, 477, 486, 492, 494–495, 497–498, 501–503, 512, 514, 516–518, 528–533, 536, 538, 547–548, 550, 557, 561–562, 569, 571–572
Scribes, 281

Scythians, 194, 281, 515
Socratics, 75, 143, 209, 294, 321, 354, 423, 500, 516, 557
Sophists, 90, 143–145, 216, 219, 241, 270, 357, 385, 466, 468, 522
Spinozists, Spinozism, 51, 54, 95, 117, 119–124, 127–128, 135, 161–162, 199, 286, 338, 347–348, 355–356, 358, 361–362, 364, 366–370, 436–437, 445, 447, 461, 475, 478, 486, 506–507, 536, 542, 572
Stoics, Stoicism, vii, 33, 35, 43–44, 53–54, 57, 66–67, 74, 76, 80, 83–84, 89, 101, 120, 144, 153, 164, 193, 199, 216, 234, 242, 244, 258, 281, 283, 289, 293–294, 309, 320–321, 326, 333–334, 336, 339–340, 346–348, 354–355, 358, 361, 364–365, 379, 390, 406, 422–423, 426, 443, 445, 448, 452–454, 461–462, 465–466, 468, 472, 483, 495, 497–498, 500, 516–518, 524–525, 529, 539, 541–542, 546–547, 552, 557
Syncretistic philosophy, Syncretism, 9, 23, 27–28, 46, 61, 66, 303, 340, 351, 490, 501, 503, 505, 516, 518, 525, 537, 539, 544, 572

T
Theodoreans, 466
Theosophists, 501, 518
Thracians, 281, 353, 515

Z
Zindichits, 120